

*K. B. 1. 1. 1.*  
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**A  
PLAINE  
AND FAMILIAR  
EXPOSITION OF THE  
First and Second Chapters  
of the Prouerbes of  
Salomon.**

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By ROBERT CLEVER.

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LUKE 8. 10.

*And he said, Vnto you it is giuen to know the secrets of the  
kingdome of God, but to other in PARABLES, that  
when they see, they should not see, and when they heare,  
they should not understand.*

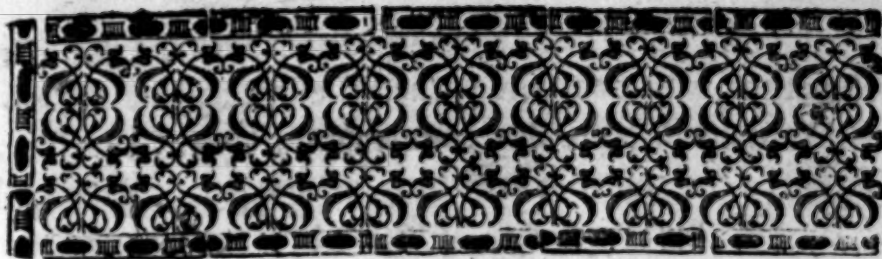


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## THE PRINTER TO the Reader.



Er aduenture thou wilt maruaile at the present Exposition of these Chapters as vnseasonable; neither published in due time, nor seated in fit place, inasmuch as they ought either to haue beene dealt in sooner, and put in the fore-front of the worke, or else to be deferred longer, vntill the latter Chapters were finished; For heere they stand alone, farre distant and remote from all those that as yet haue beene expounded. If this be a matter worthy reprehension lay the fault on mee; let the Author be freed from all imputation and blame, who hath no hand in this order and proceeding; For he hath made an explanation of the whole Booke of PROVERBS, and committed the same vnto mine hands, minding that it should first be printed, & this afterward annexed thereunto, with resolution as soone as may be to finish all those Chapters which remaine betweene these and the Ninth. But vpon reasons such as seemed of importance to mee, I made bolde to take another course, as to begin with this which he thought fittest for

*The Printer to the Reader.*

the second place, and then to accomplish his desire in the other, wherevnto he wished the precedencie: neither am I willing to doe him wrong herein, but foresignified my purpose vnto him, and was not gaine said by him, and also I will as soone as I may cause the explanation to passe thorow the Presse, to satisfie his minde, who doubtlesse both  
 longerh and laboureth for thy  
 benefit and profit:

*Fare-well.*

The present condition of the  
the present condition of the

Author believed that all information and data are  
worthily researched by the fact of interest. The  
author has no interest in this order and procedure for the  
author of a book or document of a whole book or a  
part of a book, and concluded that the author is the

to finish all those Chapters which remain to be written.



A Summarie of all the Doctrines  
collected out of the severall verses of  
these two Chapters.

CHAP. I. VERS. I.

- Doct. 1. **T**He Scriptures of God are not onely replenished with truth, but with profound wisdom.
- Doct. 2. Salomon is the elected, sanctified, and undoubtedly saved childe of God.
- Doct. 3. Godly parents, and vertuous children are mutuall ornaments one to another.
- Doct. 4. Great men are much graced by the fruits of their Pietie, and Wisdom.

VERS. 2.

- Doct. 1. **I**T maketh much for the commendation of words or writings to be usefull or profitable.
- Doct. 2. Knowledge is the first, and a necessarie fruit of Gods word in the hearts of his seruants.
- Doct. 3. He that will be iudicious in the substance of Religion must be skilfull in the words and sense of it.

VERS. 3.

- Doct. 1. **T**He word of God is the onely true rule of all good actions.
- Doct. 2. All men ought to labour for integritie in well doing.

VERS. 4.

- Doct. 1. **T**He Scriptures of God are written as well for the benefit of the meane and ignorant, as of the great and learned.
- Doct. 2. Men without spirituall wisdom are no better then children.

VER. 5.



## A Summary of the Chapters.

### VERS. 5.

- Doct.1. *THE more sound grace and knowledge any man hath, the more he will get.*  
Doct.2. *Whosoever will thrive in knowledge, must be diligent in hearing.*

### VERS. 7.

- Doct.1. *THEN a man is wise indeed, when hee is truly religious.*  
Doct.2. *All sinfull persons are fooles.*  
Doct.3. *Wicked men take it a great indignitie to be taught their ductie.*

### VERS. 8.

- Doct.1. *THE same affection ought to be betweene teachers and their People, as is between Parents and their Children.*  
Doct.2. *The feare of God is to be learned in childhood under the government of parents.*  
Doct.3. *It belongeth to both the parents to informe their children in godlinesse and religion.*

### VERS. 9.

- Doct.1. *NO ornament can so much adorne one as Grace will.*

### VERS. 10.

- Doct.1. *WHEN any man beginneth to take good waies, he is like to be resisted by euill counsels.*  
Doct.2. *They that be nought themselves, are also readie to peruert others.*  
Doct.3. *It is good before temptations, to resolute, not to yeeld vnto them.*

### VERS. 11.

- Doct.1. *THE Lord iudgeth of wicked mens waies according as they be, and not after the pretences that are made of them.*  
Doct.2. *When cruell men intend most mischief, they commonly make least shew thereof.*  
Doct.3. *None are so much subiect to wrongs, and iniuries, as they that least deserue them.*

Doct.4.



## A Summary of the Chapters.

Doct. 4. Hope of safetie is one of the principall causes of all wickednesse.

VERS. 12.

Doct. 1. VNgodly men presume they shall speede well, how lowde soener their purposes be.

VERS. 13.

Doct. 1. The respect of gaine is an inducement to much iniquitie.

VERS. 14.

Doct. 1. They which are most vnrighteous seeme yet iust and liberall to some.

VERS. 15.

Doct. 1. AS well the company as the conuersation of the wicked is to be eschewed.

VERS. 16.

Doct. 1. IT is a propertie of the wicked to be swift, and prest to all that is euill.

VERS. 17.

Doct. 1. MAlitious and crafty men apply themselves as busily to intrap the innocent, as fowlers doe to catch Birds.

Doct. 2. The successe of the wicked in their attempt, is seldome answerable to your hope.

VERS. 18.

Doct. 1. ALL hurtfull persons doe most hurt to themselves.

VERS. 19.

Doct. 1. SO farre as men be conetous they be also cruell.

Doct. 2. The more wordlings doe thrue in their commodities the worse their state is.

VERS. 20. & 21.

Doct. 1. The perfection of Gods word is used in the publishing of his word, and ministerie thereof.

Doct. 2. The Lord useth to deale evidently and seriously in his word, and ministerie.

Doct. 3.

## A Summary of the Chapters.

Doct.3. God hath appointed his Gospell to be preached, and heard as publikely as may be.

Doct.4. Gods ministers, by whom Wisedome crieth, ought to doe good to mens soules in all places.

### V E R S. 22.

Doct.1. A Greater sinne in one is no excuse of a lesse in another.

Doct.2. The longer any man continueth in his sinne without repentance, the more the fault increaseth.

Doct.3. Sinne is most dangerous when it is loved and delighted in.

Doct.4. They are verier fooles which despise spirituall understanding, than which are destitute of naturall capacitie.

### V E R S. 23.

Doct.1. The best counsell that can be ginen, is to perswade a man to repent of his sinne, and leane it.

Doct.2. Reproofes, and afflictions are sent of God to helpe men toward saluation, and make them better.

Doct.3. All the maladies of Gods elect are healed by his sanctifying spirit.

### V E R S. 24. and 25.

Doct.1. The more meanes any man hath to make him good, the greater is his sinne, and danger if he make not use of them.

Doct.2. The greatest offence against the word of God is to contemne it.

### V E R S. 26. and 27.

Doct.1. Contemptuous and obstinate sinners shall finde no fauour of God in their miseries.

Doct.2. Boldnesse in committing sinne, will make the punishment thereof very terrible.

Doct.3. The despisers of Gods word, are drinen to make bootlesse prayers in their distresses.

### V E R S. 31.

Doct.1. Wicked men make themselues miserable by their owne sinnes.

## A Summary of the Chapters.

### VERS. 22.

Doct. 1. Sinfullnes doth murder them that will not learne wisdom to beware of it.

Doct. 2. A prosperous estate without grace is passing hurtfull.

## Chapter 2.

### VERS. 1.

Doct. 1. Men are nothing the better for hearing Gods word, unless they imbrace and entertaine it.

Doct. 2. They shall enjoy the comfort & benefit of the word which are carefull to retaine it.

### VERS. 2.

Doct. 1. Whosoever will attaine to learne wisdom, must apply both his eares and heart to the getting of it.

### VERS. 3.

Doct. 1. Hearty prayers to God, is a chiefe and excellent meanes to come by spirituall graces.

### VERS. 4.

Doct. 1. Grace is to be gotten with great diligence.

Doct. 2. As great paines is to be taken for spirituall things as for the best earthly commodities.

### VERS. 5.

Doct. 1. They that faithfully use good meanes to come by knowledge shall certainly obtaine it.

### VERS. 6.

Doct. 1. God himselfe is the onely effectuall teacher of his people.

### VERS. 7. and 8.

Doct. 1. Faithfull men haue a better estate then the world knoweth of.

Doct. 2. Godly men liue in greatest safetie.

Doct. 3. God watcheth as much ouer his people to rescue them from sinne, as from any bodily dangers.

### VERS. 10. and 11.

Doct. 1. The fruit and vertue of wisdom for preservation, belongeth to them that imbrace it with good affection.

B

VERS.



## A Summary of the Chapters.

VERS. 12.

Doct. 1. IT is the proper marke of a sinfull man to accustom his lippesto talke proudly.

VERS. 13.

Do. 1. THE more wilfully men sin, the greater offenders they are.

VERS. 14.

Doct. 1. THEY are of all others the most grievous malefactors, to whom sinne is delightfull.

VERS. 16.

Do. 1. THE loue and vertue of Gods word is the onely sound remedy against the sinne of whoredome.

VERS. 17.

Doct. 1. THEY which set their liking upon strangers, doe alienate themselves from their yoke-fellows.

Doct. 2. The wife is to be ordered by the gouernment and guidance of her husband.

Doct. 3. It is fit for yong parties to be bestowed in marriage with conuenient speed, as soone as they are of ripe yeares.

Doct. 4. Vnsaithfulnesse to ones yoke-fellow, is alwaies ioyned with impiety against God.

VERS. 18.

Doct. 1. ALL adulterers lye in perill of death and damnation.

VERS. 19.

Do. 1. VERY few adulterers are cured of that sinne, and repen to saluation.

VERS. 20.

Do. 1. IT much concerneth them that would lye Christianly to imitate the examples of the godly.

VERS. 21. and 22.

Do. 1. THE Lord doth not wholly reserue mens reward for the Indgement to come, but giueth to many some part of their pay in this world.

FINIS.

AN





# AN EXPOSITION OF THE FIRST

Chapter of the Prouerbs.

## CHAPTER. I.

Verf. I. *The Parables of Salomon, the sonne of Dauid,  
King of Israell.*



**I**N this whole Booke, we are to consider first the title or inscription, being as it were the head thereof, laid downe in this present verse, and the firs next following, and then the Tract. or Treatise, as the bodie of the same, from the beginning of the sequenth verse, to the

end of the last Chapter. In the title, God giueth a singular commendation of the Booke, first, from the subiect matter, secondly from the Scribe or Pen-man (both which are described

in this our Text) and thirdly, from the end and vnder of, as shall appear in the words ensuing. The matter of *his Parables*, whereby are sometimes meant, darke, and myſtical ſayings, not eaſie to be vnderſtood, as when they ſay to Chriſt, *Why ſpeakeſt thou to them in Parables?* and againe, *Loe now thou ſpeakeſt plainly;* and thou ſpeakeſt *no Parable*: ſometimes a borrowed ſpeech, a ſimilitude, or compariſon, as when it is ſaid, *All theſe things ſpake Ieſus to the multitude in Parables*: and ſometimes ſhort and ſweet proverbiall ſentences, full of weight and wiſedome, as when it is ſaid, *My mouth ſhall ſpeake of wiſedome, and the meditation of mine heart is of knowledge. I will incline mine eare to a Parable, and viter my graue matter vpon the Harpe.* And heere now doth the word beare all theſe ſenſes in this place. The Scribe whom God vſed as his Secretary, or Pen-man, was *Salomon*, who is deſcribed by his parentage, as being *Dauid* his ſonne, and by his dignitie, that hee was a King, whoſe honourable eſtate is illuſtrated by his glorious dominion or ſubiects, *Iſrael*, the people of the Lord, whom he had choſen to be his portion, and the lot of his inheritance, and that whileſt they were in their perfection of beautie, both for Church and Common-wealth, making but one and the ſame entyre and vndeuided body, not yet diſmembred, nor rent a ſunder one Tribe from another, as afterwards they were in the ſucceeding ages.

*Doct. 1.* *The Parables, &c.* The Scriptures of God are not onely replenished with truth, but with profound wiſedome.

If ſo many Iemmes and Jewels bee to be found in this Booke, which is as it were, but one caſket of the holy writings, what a multitude, & maſſe of riches are laid vpon together in the whole volume of the Bible, which is the Lords full treaſurie? They which haue bin writers of ſome parts, haue bin almoſt aſtoniſhed at, and raviſhed with the eminency of other parts, before many of the diuine, and more then heavenly Bookes and Prophecies were extant: as the *Psalmiſt* profeſſeth to the Lord, ſaying: *Thy teſtimonies are wonderfull, therefore doth my ſoule keepe them. The entrance into thy words ſheweth light, &c.* The *Apoſtle Peter* teſtifieth, the words (that is the writings)

*Mat. 13. 10.*  
*Iohn 16. 29.*

*Mat. 13. 34.*

*Pſal. 49. 3. 4.*

*Pſal. 119. 129.*  
*130.*

of

of the Prophets to be both *fore* in regard of the veritie, and *light* that shineth in a darke place, in respect of the splendor, and excellency thereof. And Saint Paul commendeth the Law for the glory which it had, but especially the Gospell to be exceeding glorious. For reasons wee will confine our selues to the booke in hand, and adde but little to the arguments wherewith the holy Ghost adorneth this Scripture. 2 Pet. 1. 19

First then, the matter, and such as is not without decent forme, and vpon due cause, doth in the forefront and entrance, winne praise and commendation to the whole worke. It containeth no slender and triuial discourse, but *Proverbs, Parables, select sentences*, (for faith, manners, estate, and government, as well domesticall, as publike) the choyse, and chiefe, and very quintessence of three thousand, wherof euery one proceeded from rare wisdom and iudgement. Reason. 1.

Secondly, the instruments whom God directed to indite this booke and others, are much to be respected, as principall men, as *Salomon, Moses, David, Isaia, Daniell, Paul, Peter, James, John*, and the rest. What *Aristotle*? what *Plato*? what *Socrates*? what Booke-reader, or Booke-writer, in any Nation hath bin found to be matchable with them? Heare what the Lord himselfe doth testifie of this our *Salomon*: *God gaue him wisdom, & vnderstanding exceeding much, and a large heart, euen as the sand that is on the Sea shore. His wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East, and all the wisdom of Egypt: For he was wiser than any man.* If it be said, that though he was the wisest then, yet afterwards among the *Grecians*, or *Romanes*, others might surmount him, let that be remembered which God did promise vnto him, *Loe I haue giuen thee a wise, and vnderstanding heart, so that there hath bin none like vnto thee before thee, neyther after thee shall arise the like vnto thee.* Now all this confirmeth the point which we intreat of, that from such mens pens is to be expected both verity of matter, and depth of vnderstanding, and that expressed in an elegant manner, though carnall affectation be condemned by the Apostle. For who can speake more to this purpose than *Salomon* himselfe, of whom, and of whose workes, wee are now discoursing? 1 King. 4. 29. 30



Ecc. 12. 9. 10.

*The more wise, (saith he) Ecclesiastes was; the more he taught the people knowledge, and caused them to heare, and searched forth and prepared many parables. Ecclesiastes sought out pleasant words, and an upright writing, upon the words of truth. Such writers hath the Lord vsed for the benefit of his people, & so hath he honoured the sacred volumes of his Scriptures: and yet are they dignified with greater credit, authority, and wisdom, than either Salomon, Dauid, or Daniell, or any other creature in heauen or earth is able to yeeld vnto them: For though men haue beene agents in them, yet the infinite, and only wise God is the author of them. No prophetic in the Scripture, (saith S. Peter) is of any private motion: For the prophecy in old time came not by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moued by the holy Ghost: And Saint Paul accordeth with him fully, and auerreteth the same, though more briefly: The whole Scripture is giuen by inspiration from God.*

2 Pet. 1. 20. 21.

2 Tim. 3. 16.

3.

Thirdly, the fruit and good effects of this booke in the sentences next following specified, and the same of others, declare that they are richly furnished with wisdom: For how could they otherwise make so many wise? How could they continually giue knowledge to the most ignorant, and increase knowledge in the most learned, if there were not founts, and flowing streames of admirable knowledge in them? For drie ditches vse not to send forth riuers of waters.

Use.

Which serueth for the reproofe of many curious heads, which cannot away with the simplicity, and plainnesse of the word: it is toyle some and tedious to them to bestow their time in reading, or hearing of that which is so homely, so rude, and rustickall (for no better doe they esteeme of Gods heauenly Oracles.) And what causeth this distastefulnesse? Why doe they relish the bread of life no better? They finde no matter able to satisfie their fine wits, nor elocution fitting their nice, and dainty cares. Such rare gifts as they haue, must be answered with suitable learning, & exquisite skil, and iudgement. Well then, the meditations of Dauid are too shallow for your deepe reach, and profound capacity; Pauls writings be too barren of matter to content your mindes; and Salomons sayings



ſaying ſauour not of ſufficient learning & wiſdome for your  
 inſtruction: but know that this conceit proceedeth from wit-  
 leſſe and want of wiſdome, as not hauing grace and vnder-  
 ſtanding to apprehend the counſels of God, which are deliue-  
 red by *Dauid, Paul, Salomon*, and the reſt of the holy writers:  
 For who but a ſoole would make himſelf wiſer than *Salomon*?  
 Therefore you leaſt *Manna*, becauſe Onions, and Garlickes,  
 and Leekes, be fitter for you, than Angels food. You might  
 know (proude men) if pride did not deſpue you of knowledge,  
 that the Prophets and Apoſtles ſpoke wiſdome, and wrote wiſ-  
 dome among them that are perfect, though not the wiſdome of  
 this world: but the wiſdome of God in a miſtery, euen hid wiſe-  
 dome, which God reuealeth by his Spirit: For the naturall man  
 vnderſtandeth not the things which are of God. Who ſeech not  
 in theſe perſons, an execrable careleſſe of holy things, ſo  
 baſely to vilifie that which in all the world is the moſt wor-  
 thy, and precious? Neyther yet is this all, that diuers are to be  
 charged with, though more than euer they can auoid, but in  
 this they ſhew a greater contempt, that they forſake *Salomons*  
*parables*, and Chriſt his precepts, and Gods owne diuine coun-  
 ſels, and cleaue to *Machanill* his profane, doggiſh, and diuel-  
 liſh poliuiques. Theſe they read, ſtudie, meditate of, and de-  
 light in, and daily practiſe, when they caſt away the Bible and  
 conterned it. *Of Salomon, &c.*

Somewhat muſt be ſpoken of the writer  
 heere mentioned, *Salomon*, before we come to the next point,  
 ſeeing it pleaſeth the Lord to honour his name, by prefixing  
 it to the beginning of this Sacred Booke, that it doth appeare  
 both by this worke, and the reſt of his writings canonized  
 for the perpetuall vſe of the Church, that he is elected, ſan-  
 ctified, and ſaued (howſoeuer diuers without due cauſe haue  
 called his ſtare in queſtion) for the holy Ghoſt, by Saint *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 21.  
 doth witneſſe of the Prophets, and writers of the Scriptures,  
 that they were *holy men of God*. And as for *Salomon*, more per-  
 ticular testimonies are giuen of him, and ſuch as make mani-  
 feſt the purpoſe of God for his ſaluation. Before hee was  
 borne the Lord profeſſeth his goodneſſe towards him, that  
 he

Doct. 2.

2 Sam. 7. 14.  
15.

1 King. 2. 2.

2 Chron. 11. 17.

Use. I.

he would adopt him for his owne childe, and (notwithstanding all the transgressions which he should commit) yet he would continue faithfull, and gracious vnto him. *I will be his Father (saith he) and he shall be my son: and if he sinne I will chastise him with the rod of men, but my mercy shall not depart away from him.* Afterwards at his birth he declared the constancy of his free, & vnderferued kindnesse which he bare vnto him before he was, or had done good or euill: and twice in one place doth testifie that hee loued him; and therefore sent the Prophet Nathan to appoint that he should be named *Iedidiah*, and who knoweth not that the loue of the Lord is eternall, and neuer subiect to any mutation? And it is confirmed in *Salomon* by good effects, of whom it is said, *that he loved the Lord, walking in the ordinances of David.* Indeed he fell fearefully, and that into Idolatry, but he arose againe by repentance, the authentick records whereof hang at this day, and shall doe to the end of the world vpon the file: as well the Booke *Ecclesiastes*, which sheweth how that his soule was gathered into the bosome of the Church againe, as that saying in the Booke of *Chronicles*: *They made Rehoboam the sonne of Salomon mighty three yeeres long: For three yeeres long they walked in the waies of David, and Salomon.* Out of which we may collect that when his sonne came to the Crowne, he found Idolatry demolished and religion established as it had beene formerly in the dayes of *David*.

Now albeit this point be personal, touching one man particularly, & neither raised, nor prosecuted, in such manner as other doctrines, yet may it serue for more general vse, as to be an admonition to all, euen of best gifts, and graces, to take heed to themselves that they lose not their standing. *Salomon* (as the seuerall texts quoted doe beare him witness) had good proofe & experience of Gods fauor, of Gods blessings, of Gods Spirit, and yet he declined from the loue of God, from the way of God, and from the worship of God, & prouoked God to threaten him, & to bring iudgements vpon his posterity: and therefore if he slipt and stumbled so dangerously, let no man bee remisse to looke well to his footing. Wilt thou say thy wise-  
dome

dome shall support thee, and hold thee vp? So it will if it leane constantly on the wisdom of God, for his direction, otherwise remember that *Salomon*, who fell so grievously, had beene also wise, and therein in that respect thy better. Wilt thou say my election is confirmed to mee, I am chosen, and called, and beloued of the Lord, and therefore in no perill of swauing? It is true, that by the vertue of election, vocation, and eneralting loue of God, thou shalt be established, if thou wilt goe out of thy selfe, and in godly feare depend vpon him, otherwise consider that *Salomon* had all the prerogatiues ratified vnto him personally, and by name, and yet diuerted, and went farre away.

There is a worthy saying of *Nehemiah* for this purpose, though in a particular case, *reproving* them that had married Idolatrous wiues; *Did not Salomon King of Israel sinne by these things, yet among many nations there was none like vnto him? For he was beloued of his God, and God made him King ouer Israel: yet strange women made him to sinne.* *Nehem. 13. 26.*

By this likewise we may be induced to moderation of censure towards our brethren, which haue bene wont to walke in the right pathes of truth and piety; though they should faile sometimes in faithfull proceeding therein, nay though Satan should surprize them, though the world, or their owne corruptions should draw them to sinfull courses, and holde them fast in the same for a season, wee may, and must condemne their sinnes, and instabilitie; we ought, and by ductie are bound to reprove and admonish them of their faults, according as our place requireth, and opportunity occasioneth; but deprauce not the former fruits of Gods holy spirit, as though there neuer had been any vprightnesse in them, neither passe sentence concerning their future condition, as though their saluation were departed from them: For so shouldest thou in rigour pursue those, whom God in mercie hath spared: so should *Salomon*, *Asa*, and other godly men, whom the Lord in his throne hath acquitted, be brought to thy barre to be condemned: so maist thou make thine owne wayes as slippery as theirs were, and falling, should find many

Vse 2.



Gal. 6. 1.

Doct. 3.

Pro. 17. 6.

Reasons 1.

as ready to iudge thee as thou doest them, and few to shew compassion on thee, as thou shewest none to others. And therefore that equall precept, and prudent Counsell of the Apostle: Brethren, if any man by occasion be fallen into any fault, yee which are spirituall, restore such a one with the spirit of meeknesse, considering thy selfe, lest thou also be tempted.

The Sonne of David, &c. Godly parents and vertuous children are mutuall ornaments one to another. When thou readest that Salomon had such a father, thou maiest boldly conclude that he was honorably descended: and when thou readest that David had such a sonne, thou maiest easily conceiue, that he was happy in that his seede and succellour. A good roote maketh the branches to flourish, by vertue of the liuely sappe that it sendeth vp: and flourishing branches winne praise to the roote, for the pleasant fruit which they bring forth. Childrens children are the crowne of the Elders, and the glory of children are their Fathers. Abraham, Isaack, and Iacob, are so renowned by their relation each to other, in a reciprocall manner for parentage, and progenie, that wee seldom make mention of one without the remembrance of them all. Ioseph was the ioy and Iewell of Iacob, and Iacob brought honour, and credit to Ioseph, as well by his gravity and wisdom in the presence of Pharao, at his first comming into Egypt, as by his laudable behaviour at all times afterwards among the Egyptians, as their dolefull lamentation at his Funerall declared. Iohn the Baptists father and mother haue testimonie to be both of them iust before God, and to walke in all the commandements, and ordinances of the Lord, without reproofe, which the Spirit of God doth purposely record, to illustrate his person, and ministry, by their holy conversation, and to celebrate their names, and memories by his shining graces.

First, this is true, right, and proper nobility for a godly off-spring to succede religious progenitours: For that is a race of Princes, and lineage of Kings: euery good man is of the best family, and Gods childe, and euery childe of God partaketh of Christ his royall dignity.

Secondly,



Secondly, the goodnesse of God to the childe prepared him such a righteous parent, and made him so wise, faithfull, and prosperous in his government; and his mercy to the parent gaue him such a gracious childe, and made him so teachable, tractable, and obsequious to his discipline.

For vs see *Chap. 10. vers. 1.* touching the benefit of good children: and *Chap. 17. 6.* concerning the honor arising from godly parents.

*King of Israel, &c.* Great men are much graced by the fruits of their piety and wisdom.

Dott. 4.

*Salomons* crowne was the brighter and more magnificent, in his owne time (his name was famous in all places) by his prudent and righteous acts, and sayings: and it still retaineth the honour: his title of King of Israel is magnified, and much adorned by the recitall, and mention of these Parables, and those other Bookes of *Ecclesiastes*, and *Canticles*. His father perswading him (being but young) vnto such honourable seruices, did also fore-tell him of such promotions. *Exalt wisdom* (which is done, not by speculation, but by practise) *and she shall exalt thee: she shall bring thee to honour, if thou embrace her: She, yea, she shall giue thee a crowne of glory.* It is to be obserued, that Princes of the same place, but yet not walking in the same steps, haue not all attayned to the same eminencie, and estimation. *Achas* the wicked father was King of Iudah, before *Hezekiah* the godly sonne, but yet base, and despised, whereas his sonne was glorious, and renowned. And is there any proportion betwene the memoriall of *Saul*, and *Dauid*, though *Saul* reigned ouer all Israel as well as *Dauid*?

First, sanctity, well-doing, and goodnesse, is estimable with God: the Lord respecteth those that are seruiceable to him, and his Church: but he nothing regardeth such as haue nothing else to decke them but superiority, and dignity. *Reasons. 1.*

Secondly, wisdom, godlinesse, mercy, and iudgement, allure mens hearts to like of them best in whom they shine most: and howsoever others that are vicious may haue bare heads, or bended knees presented vnto them, with plausible titles,

titles, and formall complements, yet they are not truly reuerenced: the hearts of all doe censure them, and so would the tongues also of most, if by feare, and other like respects, they were not silenced.

3

Thirdly, the records and fame of piety and righteousness remaine aliue, when the bodies of the righteous and godly, are dead and buried: succeeding ages shall retayne the monuments, and enioy the benefit thereof. *Dauids* Psalmes were not enclosed in *Dauids* Sepulchre: nor the remembrance of *Iosias* his zeale in redressing things amisse, was intombed with *Iosias* when hee was interred. Whereas the pompe, and potencie of men in great place, and of no vertues doth perish with their breath, and consume before their bodies, that onely which tarrieth behinde them, is the tracke and reftification of their wicked wayes, for their perpetuall shame, and ignominie.

Vse 1.

Instruction for all noble men, and personages of high degree to imitate *Salomon*, and follow him in his laudable pathes, and fore-steps of doing, speaking, or writing of such things as are worthy of their names or places. Hee spent not the dayes of his peace idly, or euilly, but as hee guided his kingdome and household admirably well in all things, so he gaue himselfe to much private study, both of Diuinitie and Philosophie: For ouer and besides these three Boukes of canonicall Scripture, reserued for the Church for euer, hee left also the fruits of his labour in the custody of man, among their ciuill records for future ages then next ensuing. Oh, that ours then, by his example (they especially vpon whom many depend) would giue some testimonie of their knowledge, that they are acquainted with the wayes of God of their religion, that they are well seasoned with the feare of the Lord: of their goodnesse, that their trauailes be to benefit those of their owne times, to leaue instructions for the vse of posterity.

Vse 2.

Confutation of that ordinary, and too often vrged shift, they haue no leasure for such exercises, the multitude, and multiplicity of their affaires permit them not to bestowe them-

themselves in that fashion. But haue you more imployment then had *Salomon*? Is your businesse greater or more waigh-  
 sic than his was? He had a Kingdome to gouerne, euen that  
 ample, and honourable kingdome of *Israell*, the visible  
 Church of God, whereof hee testifieth to the Lord himselfe,  
*saying, Thy seruant is in the middlest of thy people, which thou* 1 King. 3.8.9.  
*hast chosen, euen a great people which cannot be told, or numbred*  
*for multitude: who is able to iudge this mighty people?* He had  
 also many Prouinces to rule, and retayne in subiection, as  
*Moab, Ammon, Edom, Palestine,* and others. He had great  
 buildings in hand, for many yeeres, as the Temple of the  
 Lord, the fairest edifice in all the world. It was not a small  
 matter to maintaine seauen-score, or eight-score thousand  
 men at worke daily for seauen yeeres together, besides the  
 worke of the minde, and thoughts occupied about the plot,  
 contriuall, and furniture of such a building, with all necessary  
 appurtenances belonging vnto it. And haue you more to do  
 than *Dauid* had, who iudged so many Tribes, and fought so  
 many battailes for the defence of his Subiects, and van-  
 quishing of his enemies? and yet hee reserued seasons for  
 prayer, thanks giuing, meditation, reading, writing, and all  
 good duties. *Iosuah* (notwithstanding his heauie burden of  
 gouerning, and warring) was commanded by the Lord, that  
 that *Booke of the law* should not depart out of his mouth, but  
 to meditate in it day and night. And the King is required in  
*Deutronomy*, to reade therein all the dayes of his life. And  
 who are you that be more full of businesse than they were?  
 Certaine it is, you are more busie then well occupied.

Reprooſe of that niceneſſe, and pride, wherewith ſo many  
 are ſo ſtrangely poſſeſſed, which thinke it a vexation of minde  
 to weare out their wits, with this kinde of ſtudies, and repute  
 it a diſparagement to their dignities, to ſpend their breath  
 about ſuch diſcourſes; when the reading of laſciuious Bookes  
 is delectable, when oathes, and all kinde of execrable ſpeeches  
 ſeeme gracefull vnto them. But curſed creatures they are,  
 which diſdayne to performe honourable ſeruiſe to their  
 Creator, delighting rather to be miſerable bond-men, to doe

Vſe 3.



the vilest drudgerie of the Diuell his enemye. They forget that they owe as much homage to the chiefe Lord of heauen, as the basest peasant: his soueraigntie is as high ouer Emperours, sitting in their Thrones, as the poorest captiues, grinding at the Milne. They forget that their preheminences aboue others in dignity, parentage, plenty, or the like, ought to be motiues to greater seruiceablenesse, and not causes of exemption from Christian seruices: For the greater wages they receiue, the more worke they should doe: the better tenements they hold, the larger rents they should pay: and the higher they are exalted by him, the deepe-lier they are indebted to him. Those which honour him shall receiue encrease of honour from him. There is none so excellent, but he can make him yet more eminent, and stronglier establish him, whereas on the contrary side for their impiety, and contumacie, hee will cast downe flat to the ground such as seeme to stand vp in the height and strength of mountaines. See Chap. 16. verse 12.

Verse 2. *To know wisdom and instruction, to understand the words of knowledge.*

**H**ere beginneth the third part of the inscription, wherein is contayned the vse, and end of this Booke, which is  
 Two-fold: { First, generall, such as is common to all, ver. 2. 3.  
 Secondly, speciall, such as concerneth some  
 kindes of men. ver. 4. 5. 6.

The generall vse is partly for the minde and vnderstanding, as in this verse, partly for the practise, and wayes, as will appeare in the next. Our Text saith, that it was written to incite and teach men to *know Wisdom*, to attaine vnto, and proceede in the knowledge of things that may make a man wise to saluation: and *Instruction*, to wit, the meanes whereby that wisdom is to be obtayned, as doctrine, exhortation, reprehension, &c. and to *understand the words of knowledge*, those sayings, and sentences, wherein knowledge and wisdom is deliuered.

It maketh much for the commendation of words, or writings to be usefull, and profitable.

Doct. 1.

Therefore would the holy Ghost haue this Booke to be esteemed, and embraced of all sorts, because all sorts may be instructed by it: it will enlighten their vnderstandings, it will worke vpon their affections, it will direct, and order their behauiour. And it is spoken in the praise of all the Scriptures, not onely that they are *giuen by inspiration of God*, but *be also profitable to teach, to improue, to correct, and to instruct in righteousness*, that the man of God may be absolute, being made perfect vnto all good workes. And diuers of the Psalmes of Dauid, haue the vses of them prefixed before them in their titles, as to giue instruction. Psal. 119. *A Psalm of praise.* Psal. 100. *A Psalm for remembrance, &c.* On the contrary side, the Lord himselfe by this our Salomon, doth condemne vnprofitable Treatises, which serue not to make their Readers the better, and admonisheth those that will hearken to him, to beware of them: *For there is none end in reading many bookes, and much reading is a wearinesse to the flesh.* And as for speeches, the comparisons whereby the spirit of God doth grace the mouthes, and tongues of godly men, doe giue a cleare testimony, that hee respecteth them for the good which they do, and the commodity that commeth by them: *as the tongue of the iust man is as fined siluer: the mouth of the righteous will be fruitfull in wisdom.*

2 Tim. 3. 16.

Eccle. 12. 12.

Pro. 10. 11. 20.

31.

First, all things are regarded of all wise men more or lesse, according to the vse of that may be made of them, and the benefit which they will yeeld. As some trees are well fenced, and tenderly nourished, others cut downe with the Axe, or digged vp by the rootes: some beasts are for euery Chap-mans money, and no price too deare that is demaunded for them: others are reiected as refuses, and will bring the owners no money in the Market: some grounds are farmed out at high rates, men are desirous of them, though their rents, or incomes grow great, others are neglected, and little set by, scarce any Tenant will giue ought for them. And what moueth men to seeme so partiall in their choise? to put such a difference

Reasons. 1.

difference betweene one thing and another? the different value, and worth of the things, because the one is farre more commodious than the other.

2

Secondly, the tongue that is exercised in speaking fruitfully, and the hand that is applied to write vscfully, doe manifest an heart that is stored with loue, and other graces: *A good man out of the treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things; and an euill man out of the treasure of his heart bringeth forth euill things: For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*

3

Eccle. 12. 9.

Thirdly, when men publish, or vtter such points as may vtter instruction to the Readers, or hearers, they shew forth their owne vnderstanding, and knowledge, though without ostentation or purpose of boasting. *The more wise Ecclesiastes was, the more he taught the knowledge, and caused them to heare, and prepared many parables.*

Use 1.

Eph. 4. 29.

Col. 4. 6.

Prov. 10. 21.

Instruction to all, whether Ministers, or people, in Church, or Common-wealth, to bend their studies, and endeauiours, to direct their tongues, and talke to the most vse they can: His labours and speeches are worthy of the greatest praise, which worke best effects, and bring greatest profit. S. Paul his precept is, that nothing should come out of our mouthes, but that which is good to edifie, that it may minister grace to the hearers. And therefore that *Our communication be alwaies grations, and powdered with salt.* Let men consider, that when they make a speech, they should make a feast to them that be present to heare it (as the *Proverbs* saith) *The lippes of the righteous doe feede many.* And when they write a Booke, they professe to keepe open house to all commers, that any where will reade it: How vndecent a thing then it is to call their hungry guests vnto empty tables, or illude them with the shew of dishes without meate, whereas they expect plentifully to be sufficed with dainties?

But this exhortation may be extended yet farther, and reach as well to the eares to teach them where-vnto they should listen, as vnto the mouth, to tell it what it should say. If infectious words, or vanity must not be spoken, or written, neither



neither must they be heard, or read: whatsoever one cannot deliuer without sinne, another shall hardly entertain with safety. *That which is unsauourie (saith Iob) shall it be eaten without salt? or is there any tast in the white of an Egge? Heare my words (saith Elihu) yee wise men, and hearken to me, yee that haue understanding: for the eare trieth words, as the mouth tasteth meate.*

Iob 6.6.

Iob 34.2.3.

Reproofe of Ministers, and priuate persons that studie hard, and take great paines in reading, or hearing, but to little or no profit for themselues, or their brethren. Some giue heede to fables, or genealogies, without end, breeding questions rather than godly edifying: some filling the world with Bookes, and Sermons, vterly barren of all matter, that may either shew sanctity, or stirre vp any to it, or leade them in it: some peruerting the mindes of them that come within the smell of their breath, and poysoning the hearts of those that bestow reading of their Bookes: and in this ranke are the Brownists, and especially the Popish, and trayterous Priests, and Iesuites.

1 Tim. 1.4.

*To know, &c.]* Knowledge is the first, and a necessary fruit of Gods word in the hearts of his seruants. Many other vertues are wrought by it, in them that shall be saued by it, but none without this, nor before this: this is alwaies one effect of it, wheresoeuer it is ordayned to take any effect, that is the eldest daughter of the Gospell, and mother of all other good graces. So runneth the promise of the Lord by Ieremiah: *They shall know me from the least of them to the greatest of them.* Such is the profession of the faithfull people by Hosea: *Then shall we haue knowledge, and endeauour to know the Lord.* And this acknowledgement is made in the name of all the faithfull by Saint Iohn: *We know that the Sonne of God is come, and hath giuen vs a minde to know him.* See Chap. 9. 10.

Doct. 2.

1er. 31.35.

*To understand the words of knowledge, &c.]* He that will be iudicious in the substance of wisdom, must be skilfull to apprehend the words, and sence of it.

It is expedient, that when we shall heare fruitfull Preachers,

Doct. 3.

we be able to conceiue of their Doctrine deliuered in their

D

publike

Matth. 13. 23.

Matth. 13. 14.  
16.

Reasons I.

publicke Sermons, and as oft as we shall conuerse with faithfull people, that we discern of their wholesome sayings, vntered in their priuate conferences. It is spoken in the praise of them that receiue the seed in good ground, *that they heare the word, and vnderstand it.* The wretched estate of the obstinate hard-hearted hypocrites, is aggravated by this, that in hearing they should heare and not vnderstand, and in seeing they should see, and not perceiue: and the happy condition of his disciples extolled by this, that they had their eares blessed in hearing, and their eyes blessed in seeing.

The vtility and profit thereof, is manifold, and great: It strengtheneth the memory to contayne what it receiue: it quickneth the affections with liuely motions: it perswadeth the heart to giue credit, and yeeld obedience: the tongue is inabled by it, to testifie truely with approbation, or improbation, as the case requireth.

2

Secondly, many dangerous euils proceede from the contrary: when men discern not the sense of the word, they neuer enioy the fruit, and vertue of it, they are subiect to errors, and rash censuring, as to condemne the best, and commend the worst, to call light darknesse, and darknesse light. What causeth so many inuectiues, and clamours against comfortable doctrines, and necessary instructions? Ignorance misconstruing the meaning thereof, according to that which S. Peter saith, *They speake euill of those things which they know not. This is an hard saying,* (crie they out vpon our Saviour, when he spake most graciously) *Who can heare it?* Euen Nicodemus, though a man not immodest, but ignorant, thought he might iustly take exception against the position of Christ, affirming, *that Except a man be borne againe, hee cannot see the kingdom of God. How can a man, (saith hee) be borne which is olde? can he enter into his mothers wombe againe, and be borne?*

2 Pet. 2. 12.

Ioh. 6. 60.

Ioh. 3. 4.

And as the truth not vnderstood is depraued, and traduced, so is it also many times abused to iustifie that which it refuteth, to allow of that which it condemneth, and to practise that which it forbiddeth, as the Apostle witnesseth:

*In Pauls Epistles are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unstable, and vnllearned peruert, as they doe also asher Scriptures, to their owne destruction.* 2 Pet. 3. 16.

Confutation of the Papists, whose practise, profession, and constitutions, are all opposite to the purpose of *Salomon*, the wisdom of God, and the saluation of mens soules: For they locke vp the Scriptures in a strange language, they permit them not to be truly translated into knowne tongues, they forbid the people vpon penalties, to reade them in their native speech, that they should not vnderstand so much as the signification of the words: and so they resist the holy Ghost, by prohibiting, and punishing that as an hainous crime, which hee commandeth as a needfull dutie. A man might thinke that they set light by *Salomon*, and stomacked *S. Paul*, as though they purposely addicted themselves to thwart him, both by Doctrine, and deede. *Hee had rather haue five words spoken in the Church, with the vnderstanding, to instruct others, than tenne thousand in a strange language.* And they had rather haue fifty thousand babled in a strange tongue, to fill mens eares with winde, than five, or any that might enforme mens mindes for edification. And others also though not so bad as Papists, might here be taxed, which seeming to speake nothing but English among English people, doe yet so fold vp, and not lay open their matter, in vn-couth, obscure, and difficult termes, and manner, that it is almost all one, as if they preached in Latine: a great part of their hearers comprehend but a small part of their Doctrine.

1 Cor. 14. 19.

Reproufe, and terrour for many Auditors to whom the Gospell of Christ is offered, who satisfie themselves with the sound of the Ministers voyce, though they perceiue little, or nothing of that which hee teacheth. Euen this is a part of their perill, that they thinke it safe to be blinde, or deafe at Gods ordinances, to sit as it were in the Sunne-shine, and yet neither to see light, nor feelee warmth. They know not that *Satan the God of this world hath blinded their mindes, that the light of the glorious Gospell of Christ, which is the Image of God,*

2



*should not shine vnto them; neither doe they consider that when they heare the word of the Kingdome, and vnderstand it not, the euill one, (the Diuell) commeth and catcheth away that which was sown in their hearts. And as little doe they thinke, that the Lord hath couered them with the spirit of slumber, and hath shut up their eyes, that his word is as a sealed Booke to them, or they such as cannot reade in a Booke that is open.*

*Matth. 13. 19.*

*Isa. 29. 10. 11.*

*Verse 3. To receiue the instruction of Vnderstanding, of Iustice, Iudgement, and Equitie.*

**T**He knowledge mentioned in the former verse, is amplified in this, both by the cause of it, instruction receiued, whereby vnderstanding is gotten, and the effects of it, the first whereof is *Iustice*, which is not restrained to the Magistrates office, nor to the duties of the second Table of the commaundements, but to be extended to all the wayes of men, that they be warrantable, and lawfull: the second is *Iudgement*, which is with mature deliberation to regard all causes, and circumstances that any way tend to the due manner of our proceedings: the third is *Equitie*, that we doe not onely walke with an euen soote, neither turning to the right hand, nor the left, but to propose a right end also in all that we deale in, with truth of heart, and vprightnesse.

*Doct. 1.*

*To receiue instruction.]* The word of God is the onely true rule of all good actions.

*Psal. 119. 9.*

When the Prophet demandeth of the Lord *how a young man should redresse his way*, he required in like manner for the direction of the auncient, and of all sorts; and the answer doth no lesse concerne one than another, when he saith, *by taking heede thereto according to thy word.* For hee professeth so much afterward of himselfe in this manner: *Thy word is a lanthorne to my feete, and a light to my pathes.*

*Ver. 105.*

*Reason. 1.*

First, the worke is Gods, and he is the pay-master of them that performe any good seruices, and therefore it is equall that hee should take authority to prescribe what hee would haue done, and after what manner.

Secondly,

Secondly, all men naturally are blinde, and no man vnderstandeth what is expedient for the honour of God, or his owne saluation, farther than hee is illuminated by the spirit, which alwayes worketh by the word.

Thirdly, nothing can be accepted of God from man without obedience, and then is hee obeyed when his precepts be obserued, and there despised where men will be their owne directers: For they renounce his authority as though he had no souerainety ouer them: they set light by his Counsels, as though in wisdom they exceeded him. See Chap. 13.

verse 16. *Justice, iudgement, &c.*] All men ought to labour for integrity in well-doing.

No act is to be attempted that is vnjust, no meanes to be vsed that are vnrighteous, no purpose to be entertained that is deceitfull. This appeareth by that commandement of the Lord, in the law, *Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soule, and with all thy might.* And by that precept of the holy Ghost in the Gospell: *Seeing wee haue these promises, dearly beloued, let vs cleanse our selues from all filthinesse of flesh, and spirit, and grow up to full holinesse in the feare of God.* It is written of *Amaziah* the King of Iudah, that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart: but *Zachary*, and *Elizabeth* his wife are commended to be both iust before God, and to haue walked in all the commandements, and ordinances of the Lord without reproofe.

First, the vnion and agreement of righteous matter, manner and end in mens actions, is the effect of faith, the fruit of the spirit, and a seruice acceptable to God.

Secondly, the want, especially the deprauation of any of them, is a sinne that woundeth mans conscience, and tendeth to the defacing of Gods Image.

Thirdly, howsoeuer the Lord passeth by infirmities in his people, yet hee iudgeth, and rewardeth according to these ioyntly, as the Prophet testifieth: *I the LORD search the heart, and trie the reins, euen to giue euery man ac-*

2

3

Doct. 2.

Deut. 6. 5.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

2 Chron. 25. 2.

Luke 1. 6.

Reason. 1.

2

3

Ier. 17. 10.

*according to the fruit of his workes.*

*Vse.*

Instruction for every man to call himselfe to a reckoning every day, how faithfully, and with what care and religion hee obserueth these duties, whether hee hath performed all, or sayled in part, or neglected the whole, that where he hath faulted, he may be humbled, and amend, and where hee hath donewell, hee may be comforted, and proceede: for wee haue neede at all seasons to looke very narrowly to all our wayes, lest we faile in deede, or forme, or affection.

2.

Reproofe of all vnrighteous persons, which howsoeuer they flatter wisdom and religion, and make a shew of liking therof, thorow verball profession, yet by their conuersation, contrary to these precepts of wisdom, requiring *justice*, *iudgement* and *equity*, they declare themselves to be dissemblers. They would be accounted her Schollers, but they learne no lesson of hir: they would be called hir subiects, but they obey not her commandements: they would be esteemed her friends, but doe nothing that may testifie their loue. No integrity is to be found in them, but this, that they be wholly and intirely sinfull.

*Verse 4. To giue to the simple sharpnesse of wit, and to the childe knowledge and discretion.*

**T**He generall vse of this Booke, and that which is common to all, hath beene shewed in the two former verses, now heere followeth that which is speciall, and concerneth some kindes of men, as the simpler sort, in this verse, and the learned in the next.

And it is vttered by way of an Anticipation, or an objection that might be made against the premisses, in this manner. These Proverbs are profound and deepe sentences, and the more short they are, the more hard, and obscure they be: well may great Schollers, men of great learning gather wisdom & knowledge from them, but wee simple and silly persons, vnlettered, vnlearned, &c. dull of vnderstanding,



derstanding, shal neuer be able to reape any profit by them: Yes (saith he) all sorts that are exercised in them aright, shall receiue good by them, one aswell as another. The first sort hee calleth by two names, Simple, and Children; by simple, vnderstanding those persons, whom else-where he calleth, foolish, ignorant, vnskilfull and such as belecue euerie thing tolde them, and yeele to euery thing imposed vpon them. To these this Booke will giue sharpenesse of wit, that is, a good capacity, with quickenesse of conceit, cunning (as the word signifieth) or subtilty, but such as is harmlesse and holy, nor whereby they are apt to beguile others, but able (notwithstanding their Dove-like simplicity) to beware and take heed to themselves, that they be not beguiled of others: which kinde of wisdom our Sauour himselfe commendeth in the Gospell. By Childe, he meaneth not Babes and Infants by age, through want of yeares, but whatsoeuer yeeres they haue on their backs, hee calleth them children, if they be Nouices, lacking iudgement, and vnderstanding, or rash, vnsetled, or mutable in that which they know: To these this booke will giue knowledge and discretion, soundnesse in iudgement, staiednesse in affection, and prudence in the ordering of all their wayes.

Prover. 14. 15

Mat. 10. 16.

*Simple, &c.* The Scriptures of God are written aswell for the benefit of the meane and ignorant, as of the great and learned.

Doffy. 1.

They doe not onely giue good precepts to the learned and men of great capacity; but likewise make them, that are yet but silly, and vnexpert, to become iudicious and capable of them.

For this, together with many other matters, doth the Prophet celebrate the praise of the Lord, and his word, saying; *Thy Testimonies are wonderfull, therefore doth my Soule keepethem. The entrance into thy words sheweth light, and giueth vnderstanding to the simple.* And for this cause it is that Wisdom calleth vpon such. by way of incitement, to be her guests, and come to her feast. *Who so is simple, let him come, hither, and to him that is destitute of wisdom, shee saith,*

Psal. 119. 130. 197.

Prover. 9. 4. 6.

Come

*Come and eate of my meate, and drinke of the wine which I haue mixed.*

Reason 1.

First, the Lord hath elected, and doth loue such no lesse then others of greater gifts and learning, and therefore caueth his word to yeeld as much vertue to their soules.

2.

Luke 10. 21.

Secondly, the good which proceedeth from the word, is freely giuen of God, vnto those to whom of his goodnesse hee doth vouchsafe it: It is the worke of his hands by his Spirit, now hee is not allured by naturall excellency, neyther doth hee stand in neede of mans Art, or any other humane helps. And this moued the Lord Iesus Christ to that reioycing and thankfulness, saying; *I confesse vnto thee Father, Lord of heauen and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and learned, and hast reuealed them to Babes: euen so Father, because it so pleased thee.*

3.

1. Cor. 1. 19. 20.

Thirdly, Wit, Art, Policy, Sciences, and all manner of learning, vn sanctified, are commonly impediments to hinder the successe of the word, through the violence of selfe-liking, the sophismes of carnall reason, and the iust iudgements of God vpon high minds, rather than helps vnto it. *For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will cast away the vnderstanding of the prudent: Where is the wise? where is the Scribe? where is the disputer of this world?*

Yet these qualities in the godly are laudable, and prayse worthy, they are profitable and helpfull, they doe assist the Ministry and all good instructions, to make them effectual, and fruitfull. He that assaulteth a Citty or Castle, shall haue the ordnance and weapons, the strength and munition against him, vntill it be surprized, and taken, and then all will be for his aduantage: and so will the indowments of the soule withstand the Spirit of God, vntill the heart be subdued to the Lord, and afterwards be vlesfull for it.

4.

Fourthly, the weakenesse of mens vnderstanding, doth much commend the power of Gods holy ordinances and grace, in working such an vnlikely transformation. And therefore *God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise, and GOD hath chosen the weake things of this world*

world to confound the mighty, and vile things of the world, and things despised hath God chosen, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should reioyce in his presence, but according as it is written, he that reioyceth, let him reioyce in the Lord. See Chap. 9. verse 4.

*Childe, &c.*] Men without spirituall wisdom are no better then children. They take preferment, they applaude their owne wisdom, and seeme to the world to be of greatest understanding, but God termeth them according as hee seeth, and knoweth them to be indeede, the best of them is but a child at the best. If childishnesse had passed away with the yeares of childhood, why would Saint Paul giue that admonition, *That we should be no more children, carried about with euery blast of doctrine, by deceit of men, and craftinesse, whereby they lie in wait to deceiue.*

Doct. 2.

The Prophet Esay maketh obstinate Non-proficients to be farre inferiour to children, esteeming it an easier matter, to learne infants new weaned, to write and reade, than such manner of oldlings to become wise and godly. Whom (saith he) shall hee teach knowledge? and whom shall hee make to vnderstand the things that hee heareth? them that are weaned from the milke? or drawne from the breasts? for precept must be vpon precept, precept vpon precept, line vnto line, line vnto line, there a little, and there a little. Yet Jeremy maketh their case worse, and marcheth them with vnreasonable creatures, saying; *Euery man is a beast by his owne knowledge:* And Zophar in the booke of Iob proceedeth further, and compareth them to sottish and contemptible beasts, saying; *Waine man would be wise, though man borne (that is by his owne corrupt nature without regeneration) be like a wilde asse-colt.*

Ephes. 4. 14.

Esay 28. 10.

Jerem. 10. 14.

Iob 11. 12.

First, all men of euery age were borne blinde, and so remaine, as touching the sauing knowledge of God, and the mysteries of saluation, vntill they be illuminated by the regeneration of the Spirit. The Elders vnderstand no more thereof, in such manner as they are to be apprehended, than the yonger sort; nor the learned than the ignorant, as the

Reason 1.



answere of Nicodemus to Christ, for the impossibility of new birth doth witnesse. Did hee speake like a man of learning, like a maister, and teacher of others, when he said, *How can a man be borne which is old? can he enter againe into his mothers wombe, and be borne?* what childe could make a more childish and more grosse obiection?

Secondly, they are more illuded and abused by Sathan, by pride, by carnall reason, by lusts, and vanity of minde, than infants are. Infants bestow not their thoughts, and time so idly, or hurtfully, as to hunt after that which they can neuer take, or to take that which will eyther poison, or deuoure them. Infants doe not macerate themselves, and cate vp their owne hearts with needlesse or bootelesse cares and vexations, putting their neckes vnder yokes, which God would neuer lay vpon their shoulders, and taking vp burthens before they be called to beare them. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are but vanity: yea the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are but vaine.*

*Psal. 94. 11.*

*1 Cor. 3. 20.*

Use 1.

Instruction, as we take it for an hainous indignitie, and disdaine it, as a matter of greatest reproach to be called by the name of childe, babe, or boy, so let vs be worthy of better esteeme, by storing our hearts with grace and heavenly wisdom, that God and his people may haue vs in estimation. Brethren (saith Saint Paul) *be not children in vnderstanding, but as concerning malicioufnesse be yee children, but in vnderstanding be of a ripe age.*

*1 Cor. 14. 30.*

2

Reproofe of their vanity, which knowing nothing as they ought to know, doe yet dreame, and are puffed vp with conceit, that they know all things, as well as they may be knowne. No men haue so great opinion of iudgement & vnderstanding as they that are without iudgement, and haue least vnderstanding of any. Commonly it comes to passe that such as in heavenly things be as silly as sucklings, doe yet rake vpon them to be as wise as God. But is not this an vniust impuration? can you nominate any that say so? Our complaint shall appeare to be righteous and true, and we can decipher many that doe so. For walke they nor in their owne wayes,

wayes, though neuer so often and earnestly forbidden? Refuse they not the seruice of God, though neuer so plainly, and strictly commaunded? Doe they not scoffe at his seruants which are better than themselues? Do they not scorne his Counsellis, whereby themselues might be made better?

But is it so necessary that they should be taught, and aduised by him? will not their owne wit and reason sufficiently instruct them? will not time, and experience be able competently to informethem? No surely, no wit, though sharpest, no time, though longest, no experience, though clearest, can suffice to get holy vnderstanding. Heare *Elihu* therefore speaking to this point, and let him decide the question. *I said (quoth hee) the dayes shall speake, and the multitude of yeares shall teach wisdom, surely there is a spirit in man, but the inspiration of the Almighty giueth vnderstanding. Great men are not alway wise, neyther doe the aged alway vnderstand iudgement.*

*Iob 32. 7. 8. 9.*

**Verse 5.** *A wise man shall heare and increase in learning, and a man of vnderstanding shall attaine vnto wise counsellis.*

**Verse 6.** *To vnderstand a Parable, and the interpretation, the words of the wise, and their darke sayings.*

**N**OW we come to the second sort of them to whose vse & profit the Prouerbs are destinated, who are set forth by two titles; first they are said to be wise, indued with an excellent knowledge of things diuine & humane: secondly, they are called men of vnderstanding, such as are qualified with an excellent facultie of perceiuing; discerning and iudging of things, that they are not easie to be mis-led or deceiued.

And these words, as well as the former tend to the preuention of an obiection, which out of the former might be raised in this manner: If your sayings and sentences be so plaine and easie, that the simple may sound them, and the childe may comprehend them, what good will they doe to the wise and learned? Men of iudgement and knowledge shall loose their labour, and mis-spend their time in reading of them,

them, what shall they get more than they have already? Yea, (saith he) the greatest Clarke and deepest Diuines may gather instruction from them, as well as the vulgar, and meaner sort of people. They are shallow inough for a little childe to wade in them, and deepe enough for a great Leuiathan to swimme in them. And therefore it is saide, that a wise man by hearing shall increase in learning, that is, there shall be added to him a great measure of knowledge, and shall attaine to wise counsells, to wit, shall be inabled to get, and purchase, possesse and keepe industrious counsells, or thoughts, euen such whereby hee may be skilfull in things pertayning to him in his affaires, as the maister of a ship is in steering and gouerning it, in the greatest dangers: for from thence is the word borrowed. Now this is further amplified in the sixt verse, that they shall cause to vnderstand (for so the Hebrew word signifieth) a Parable, any prouerbiall sentence, though difficult and obscure to others, and the interpretation thereof, the true sence and meaning of it, the words of the wise, and their darke sayings, euen to discerne of, and vnfold the most intricate points, and to answer to the hardest questions, or riddles, as the originall importeth, such as the Queene of Sheba posed Salomon withall.

1 King. 10. 1. 3.

Doctr. 1.

Psal. 119.

Doctr. 2.

Prover. 2. 2. 5.

Prover. 18. 15.

The more sound knowledge and grace any man hath, the more he will get. The Prophet which vnderstood more than his enemies, more than the ancient, more than his teachers, doth seeme yet vnlatiable, and neuer thinketh he hath enough, crying still, *Teach me thy statutes: hide not thy commandements from mee, make mee to vnderstand the way of thy precepts: open my eyes that I may see the wonders of thy law.* See Chap. 9 9.

*Shall heare &c.* Whosoever will thrue in knowledge must be diligent in hearing.

This condition is prefixed to a promise in the next Chapter, and the promise is annexed to this condition, *If thou causest thine eares to hearken vnto wisdom, thou shalt vnderstand the knowledge of the Lord, and the feare of God.* And to the same purpose tendeth this saying; *A wise heart getteth knowledge,*

knowledge,



*knowledge, and the care of the wise seeketh knowledge.*

First, God calleth for it, and requireth it of all his people that would enioy any of his spirituall blessings: Would they receiue any graces from him? then let them come with attention vnto him: the care is commonly the tunnell and conduit where-thorough he conueyeth his gifts to the soule, according to his gracious proclamation, or munificent inuitation by the Prophet: *Ho, euery one that thirsteth come yee to the waters, and yee that haue no siluer come, buy, and eate: come I say buy wine and milke without siluer, and without money? hearken diligently vnto me, and eate that which is good, and let your soule delight in fatnesse. Encline your eares, and come vnto me: heare and your soule shall liue.*

*Reason 1.*

*Isa. 55. 1. 2. 3.*

Secondly, hee hath appointed the mouth of man to declare his will vnto his people, and therefore consequently the care also to entertayne it: For these are subordinate, and answerable one to the other: If all eares were deafe, all mouthes might as well be mute, and silent. Now then since the tongue is a well-spring of life, a tree of life, and feedeth many, and enricheth many, must not our eares be vessels to receiue the commodities that are offered vnto vs? And so much the rather because the sinfull consent of the mouth and care, in euill, by the craft and cruelty of Satan, against our first parents, did spoile vs of our vnderstanding, the Lord will haue the good agreement of them in his seruices, to be meanes whereby we should recover the knowledge which we haue lost.

2

Reprooſe of those that trust so much to their owne reading, that they regard not to heare any others in the exercise of their ministerie, or to conferre with them in private. They can finde that in the Bible with the Preacher alleadgerh in the Pulpit, and in good Bookes they can as well meete with the meaning of it. But remember that the Eunuch had the Bible, so much as was then extant, as is probable: the Prophecie of *Esay* hee had, as is certaine, hee read therein, and that in such a language as he vnderstood, neither is it to be thought that he was remisse for getting or vsing other whole-

*Vfe. 1.*

some writings, such as he could come by, and yet could not he finde Christ, in that very Text which directly prophecied of Christ, before he heard *Phillip* preaching him. But it will be granted that ignorant persons, which are destitute of learning, doe ill to be confident of their owne sufficiency, and to neglect ministeriall instructions, but others who have been trayned vp, and spent all their dayes and trauailes in literature, grounded men, better scene in the tongues, parts, and more acquainted with Authors than their Teachers, must these proceede in hearing still? will not their private studies be sufficient? No. Be it knowne vnto euery one, that if hee will shew himselfe well learned, hee must further encrease in learning, and then he must *heare*, as our Text saith, that so he may learne. There are none growne to such a perfection, but that they may receiue a daily addition by hearing of their Ministers, whom God hath made their Teachers. For hee that hath set such ouer them, speaketh in them by his spirit, which is the spirit of wisdom, in the euidence whereof the younger Schollers oftentimes may passe the auncients. And if wise men see not this, it is because pride and over-wening hath besotted them, the Diuell hath blinded them, and God in his iustice, who resisteth the proud, denieth them that grace which he bestoweth vpon the humble man, the man that is lowly in his owne eyes, and esteemeth another man better than himselfe. *Iob* and his friends hearkned to *Elihu*, though by many yeares iuniour to them all: And *Apollon* disdayned not to be directed by *Aquila*, and *Priscilla*, though he was learned and mighty in the Scriptures, and they poore Tent-makers.

*Iob* 32.

*Acts* 18. 24. 26.

3

Consolation, and encouragement to them which are teachable, being ready to heare, and willing to learne, hee pronounceth their eares blessed in the Gospel, *Math.* 13. 16. He promisseth good successe vnto them in this place: They shall finde out, and follow, and giue also wise counsels: Parables shall be plaine, and very profitable vnto them. They shall be iudicious in conference with men of iudgement, hearing them with vnderstanding, answering them with wisdom,

dome, dissolving of doubts, and resolving of objections with perspicuity. The holy Ghost saith heere, that it shall be so, and those that obey him in practise doe finde it to be so, and we may boldly conclude that euermore it will be so.

*Verse 7. The feare of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fooles despise Wisedome, and Instruction.*

**T**HUS much concerning the title or inscription, now followeth the Treatise it selfe, which hath two parts, first the preparation to the proverbiall sentences, containyng many notable exhortations, and arguments, to the studie and practise of that wisdom which is containyd in this Booke, layed downe in the first nine Chapters: secondly, the proverbiall sayings themselves, from the beginning of the tenth, to the end of the Booke.

In this present verse is proposed the principall proposition and summe of these nine Chapters, that is, *the feare of the Lord*, a reuerent awe of his Maiestie, proceeding from faith, whereby through the feeling of his loue, as well as the weight of his displeasure, wee are afraid to offend him, true piety and godlinesse (for it is part for the whole worship of God; whereof it is a principall part, and as it were, the custos and keeper of the rest in their duties, all euill being committed where it is wanting) *is the beginning*, or head of knowledge, the foundation and top, the entrance, proceeding, and perfection of wisdom. In the latter part of the verse, he meeteth with a secret objection, which might be made in this manner: As much as you praise this wisdom, who regardeth it? is it not despised of the most part, and reiected euerie where? True (saith he) but what are they that contemne it? Fooles, meaning all wicked men. And therefore it is no matter what account they make of it, vnlesse they were wise. The opposition then of this sentence standeth thus: *The feare of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*, and wise men will embrace it: but how excellent so euere wisdom and instruction is, fooles will despise it.

Then



Doct. 1.

Psal. 112.  
and 128.

Then a man is wise indeede, when he is truly religious: He is pronounced happy and blessed by the spirit and word of God, happy for soule, happy for body, happy for state, happy for posterity. See Chap. 9. 10.

Doct. 2.

*Fooles, &c.*] All sinfull persons are fooles.

Whatsoever reckoning the world maketh of them, or they make of themselves, we see here, and through this whole Booke, and a many other places of Scripture what testimonie the holy Ghost giueth of them: two shall serue for all, and the one is the complaint made against them in the Prophecie of *Jeremy*: *My people is foolish, they haue not knowne me: they are foolish children and haue none understanding.* And least he might be thought to be troubled with Idiots, and naturals, and against such to direct his speech; he addeth: *They are wise to doe euill, but to doe well they haue no knowledge.* And the other is the description of their wretched estate, declared by the Psalmist. *Euill men shall not dwell with thee. The foolish or mad men shall not stand in thy sight: for thou hatest them that worke iniquity.*

Jer. 4. 23.

Psal. 5. 4. 5.

Reason 1.

Jer. 8. 9.

First, according to our Text, they are vtterly destitute of the matter of solide wisdom: they are strangers to the feare of God: *Loe they haue reiected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?*

2

Secondly, they doe the workes of folly: they rebell against the Almighty, whom they are neither able to resist, nor flye from: they loose the fauour of him, who hath the gifture of all good things, and incur the indignation of him, whose displeasure worketh certaine destruction. They may be free men and happy, and make themselves bond-slaves, and miserable: they reiect commodities that be precious and eternall, and take vp vanities that be vile and temporary: they purchase importable and perpetuall torment, with the pursue of vaine and momentany pleasures.

What wise man would forsaie the free-hold of a Lordship, and Palace, to liue as tenant at will in a smoaky Cottage? That would passe away, and depart with his gold and siluer, to lade himselfe with clay and mire? Who but a silly creature would lye

He sleeping within an inch of death, yea of eternall death, and being awaked, and shewed his danger, would yet returne to his sleepe in the same place and perill againe, and neuer remoue thence till he perish.

Instruction, not to applaude or magnifie any impious or unrighteous persons too farre, whatsoeuer their parts of nature, their learning, art, pollicy, or prosperous successe in their attempts appeare to be, lest thou shouldest gaine-say, or contradict the testimony of Gods owne mouth: He calleth them fooles, and will prooue it; and darest thou goe about to refute him, and say they are wise? Finde out an happter worldling than Christ describeth, who could get, and keepe, and increase his substance, and seeme also to in-loy the fruit thereof, by eating, and drinking, and reioycing his heart; and yet the Lord who doth neuer mistake, nor mis-call, saluted him by the name of *Foole*, and told him that hee had made prouision for he knew not whom. And heere obserue how the Lord returneth the scornes of the godlesse wretches vpon their owne faces. Nothing is more ordinary with them than to be-foole the godly for their preiudice, because they feare an oathe, they will not sweare, nor lie for aduantage, because they neglect their opportunitie of rising in the world, they loose their fortunes (as they call them) rather than they will doe violence to their consciences in any the least matters: But heere the Spirit of God doth publish to all the world, that they are the fooles indeed.

Then also is their counsell to be taken heed of and not followed: for what wisdom is it for a man to make a foole his guide and director? Neither is it safe to be sociable with them, and to frequent their company: for howsoeuer idollisme and want of capacity is not contagious, yet this kinde of wicked folly, and want of grace is very dangerous, and full of infection. *Hee that walketh with the wise, shall be the wiser, but a companion of fooles shall be made the worse.*

And in the last place, let all good men be the lesse afraid of them, notwithstanding all their accusations, threatnings,

Pro. 1.

reproaches, plots, and practises : for all that they can doe, is but onely to shoote fooles bolts, and Wisedome at all times is able to make her party good against Folly. Heede not so much what they speake, or doe, or purpose, as who they be, and what they are. Are they swearers and swaggerers? Are they filthy and adulterous? Are they couetous and oppressours? Are they impious and vnrighteous? In the iudgement of wise *Salomon*, yea of the onely wise God, they are very fooles, though neuer so great and mighty, in regard whereof wee are not to trouble our selues with their sayings. It is no great matter to be called a foole of him that is a foole : who would care for it?

Doct. 3.

*Despise instruction, &c.*] Wicked men take it for a great indignity to be taught their duty. See Chap. 15. 10.

Verse 8. *My Sonne, heare thy Fathers instruction, and forsake not thy Mothers teaching :*

Verse 9. *For they shall be a comely ornament vnto thy head, and as chaines for thy necke.*

**T**Rue Wisedome hauing beene before described, and the feare of God commended, hee adioyneth an exhortation to embrace the same, by making vse of the means thereof, where we haue to obserue

1 Precept, verse 8.

2 Promise, verse 9.

In the Precept are to be considered the subiects of it, the persons to whom it is directed, every faithfull Reader, and therefore he speaketh to all, as if it were one man : and that out of pure loue, euen as his father to his beloued childe, and because hee should hearken to him as a louing childe to his father, he calleth him *Sonne*.

In the next place the matter of the Precept is to be noted, that hee heare the doctrine whereby this wisdome is offered, called *Instruction* and *Teaching*, which he commendeth by the efficient instrumentall, to wit, his parents, which should



should incite him to be attentue to both, and contemptuous to neither.

The promise is laid downe in an elegant similitude, suting with the capacity and affections of children, to whom hee speaketh, that they, viz. *Instruction and Teaching* heard, and not forsaken *shall be a comely ornament*, in Hebrew, *an increase of grace, to the head, and as chaines for the necke*: they shall so garnish and decke thee, that if a crowne of gold were set vpon thy head, & a chaine of pearles were put about thy necke, thou couldest not be more adorned and beautified before God and men.

*My sonne &c.*] The same affection ought to be betweene Teachers and their people, as is betweene parents and children.

Dott. 1.

Saint *Paul* professeth of the *Thessalonians*, that they were his hope, and ioy, and glory: and witnesseth for the *Galatians*, that while they stood vpright, and before they were perverted, *Hee was their felicity*, if it had beene possible, they would haue plucked out their owne eyes, and haue giuen them to him. And what could *Aquila and Priscilla* haue done more for their naturall fathers and mothers, though neuer so tender and louing, than to lay downe their neckes for their sakes, as they did for the Apostles?

1 Thessal. 2. 19.  
Galat. 4. 15.

Roman. 16. 4.

First, this is expedient in respect of the cause thereof, the eyes whereby they are vnited together, which if both parts be faithfull, are such as none can be nearer: for the spirituall bands are alwayes stronger than the naturall. Hath the one brought the other to GOD, and begot him to saluation? What father did euer so much for his childe, by naturall procreation? For this benefit *Philemon* was so farre indebted to *Paul*, that all his substance was little enough to requite it; yea he owed euen his owne selfe vnto him for the same.

Reason. 1.

Phil. 1. 9.

And in this case was *Paul*, through the power of Christ, better to *Onesimus*, whom hee begat in his bonds, than father or mother, or any man, or any creature, eyther had beene or could be. And did not duty binde them to honour and esteeme of *Paul* as a most beneficiall father? And had

not *Paul* cause to reioyce, and be much affected toward such, as deare and amiable children? And they that minister food to their flockes, though others before haue conuerted their foules, doe performe a profitable, a comfortable, an acceptable, and necessary seruice: God hath made them nurses to his children, and committed his owne sonnes and daughters (as it were) to their breasts and feeding.

2.

Secondly, it is requisite for the commendable and needfull effects which it produceth: it maketh the teacher faithfull and diligent, thinking no paines too much that hee taketh for the vse of his owne, and those whom he loueth so

1 Thessal. 2. 8.

well, as the Apostle telleth the *Thessalonians*: Thus being affectioned toward you, our goodwill was to haue dealt vnto you, not the Gospell of God onely, but also our owne Soules, because yee were deare vnto vs. For yee remember brethren, our labour and travell for wee laboured day and night. And it maketh him

1 Cor. 13. 5. 7.

mercifull to pittie them in their frailties without bitterness, and patient to indure afflictions for their sakes, without discouragement; *Lone is not prouoked to anger: it hopeth all things: it indureth all things*. A tender hearted mother will not easily fall out with her little Babe, though sometimes it be wanton, and sometimes wayward, and sometimes scarce cleanly:

2 Thessal. 2. 7.

euery sense shall beare with some annoyances, and euery member will be ready to minister help vnto it: And so were we gentle among you (saith the Apostle) even as a Nurse cherisheth her children. And what caused Christ to take vp so many reproaches and troubles, and to lay downe his very life, and that with so many grieuous torments and terrors, but loue to his people? And as it is thus with the Minister, so is it also forcible in the Auditors: Thereby they become attentiu, and willing to heare: thereby they deale charitably, and make a good construction of that which is spoken: thereby they are allured to obedience, and put in practise the lessons which they haue learned: thereby they shew themselves peaceable, kinde, and respectiue to him whom God hath made their Pastor.

Use 1.

Instruction for Ministers, to put on a fatherly affection toward

ward their people; and the people a childe-like affection toward their Ministers. That the one so teach, exhort, reprove, and doe all with such loue, and care of their peoples saluation, as if they had begotten them of their owne bodies: and the other heare & regard them, as those who haue begotten them with the immortall seed of the word, or doe daily feed them with the bread and food of life. On the one side let his example be imitated which could truly say; *Yee know how that we exhorted you, and comforted you, and besought every one of you (as a father his children) that yee would walke worthy of God:* And on the other side, let this precept be obserued, giuing this charge; *Acknowledge them that labour among you, and are ouer you in the Lord, and admonish you, that you haue them in singular loue for their workes sake.*

1 Thesal. 2. 11.

1 Thesal. 5. 12.

2.

Reprofe of those Pastors, which make the Pulpit a place for Inuectiues, and not for teaching, which chuse rather to chafe and hunt their Auditors with violence and fiercenesse, than to perswade and leade them with loue and mildenesse. Howbeit this is not to exemprall men, nor all good men from rebukes: for louing parents must sometimes chide, and sometimes chastise, but that vpon necessitie, and then with moderation and compassion, the source and streame of their wayes, is lenity and kindenesse. And heere are cruell shepheards in like manner to be taxed, which starue their flocks, or poison them, or become Butchers to them: What fatherhood is to be found in these? and what shall we say of sheepe, or such as would be so esteemed, that play the dogs with their shepheards, by barking at them, and biting them? which are so farre from dealing like sonnes with their Teachers, as that they come against them in hostility, like armed enemies, to doe what mischief they can vnto them.

*Fathers instruction.*] The feare of God is to be learned in childhood, vnder the gouernment of parents. *Doct. 2.*

The seedes of instruction are to be sowne in youth, that the fruits thereof may be ripe in age: and domesticall teaching in the house will make them capable of the ministeriall preaching in the Church. And it is said, *Teach a childe in the trade* *Prover. 22. 6.*



the other, and therefore the one as well as the other, is to performe the best duties of loue vnto them.

2.  
Psal. 51. 5.

Secondly, they haue both beene causes of sinfulness and corruption in their progeny, and so ought to be helpers to the reformation and cleansing of them.

3.

Thirdly, if their sonnes and daughters prooue vertuous and obedient, both parents inioy the honour and comfort of it: if they grow to be vicious and wicked, neither can be freed from sorrow and disgrace: For it is said; *A wise sonne maketh a glad Father: but a foolish sonne is an heavinesse to his Mother.* And, *a child set at liberty maketh his Mother ashamed,* and not his father onely: it standeth then with wisdom, and good discretion, in respect of their owne happinesse, after a sort, that neyther of them be wanting in this duty.

Vse I.

Instruction, that forasmuch as God requireth this of Father and Mother, and both are ioyntly bound to take care for the good education of their children, they should assist one another by countenance, and confirmation of that which either of them hath spoken in way of counsell, approbation, or reproofe, and so they labour together in sowing and watering, contrary to that wonted diuision and opposition, which is in many places betweene husband and wife, either of them striving, with a contentious mind, to destroy that which the other well buildeth: what the mother forbiddeth, the father alloweth of: what the father condemneth, the mother commendeth. Whom he perswadeth, she peruerteth: whom she rebuketh, hee encourageth. And let not Wiues lay the whole burthen of this worke vpon their husbands shoulders, as though themselues had an exemption from the weight thereof: no such immunitie is any where granted vnto them. They shall be punished for their negligence, if they be careless: they shall be rewarded for their painefulnes, if they be faithfull: and they shall prosper in their indeauours, if they be diligent. For many opportunities are giuen them, and their paines and care preuaile much, and are very vsfull, they being most at home, and the little ones about their feet, when the men are of-

sentimes

sometimes abroad, about other employments: Wherefore children also must know that the instructions, the checks and commands of both are to be heeded and regarded without partiality. Although thy father be superiour: although he hath more power to correct, and ability to reward: and thy mother in gifts, in state, and in body be weaker, and of lesse reputation, yet let not the preheminance of the one, nor the infirmities of the other embolden thee to be vndutifull to either.

God hath ioyned them together in commission, and set them ioyntly ouer the family, and therefore they are to be obeyed together in conscience to his ordinance, the authority of one comming from the same supreme power as the other, and tending to the same end, and as much confirmed by precepts, promises, and menaces. What a curse is threatened to him that shall be contemptuous to both or any one of them? *The eye that mocketh his father, or despiseth the instruction of his mother, the Ravens of the valley, which are more fierce and cruell vpon their prey, shall picke it out, and the yong Eagles who are more busie and better able with their beakes to deuoure, shall eat it.*

Prover. 30. 17.

[Comely &c.] No ornament can so much adorne any, as grace will. The inward decking, is alwayes the most gorgeous, and the spirituall attire the richest. Because Salomon would haue the more credit given to this, and be the better beleued, hee auerreth the same in another place, and that in his fathers words to him, in way of precept, counsell, and encouragement to intertaine wisdom. *Exalt her, and shee shall exalt thee: shee shall bring thee to honour, if thou embrace her, shee shall giue a comely ornament vnto thine head, yea shee shall giue thee a Crowne of glory.* And in this sense is the Kings daughter, the Church, commended in the Psalme, to be all glorious within, hauing her cloathing of broydered gold, and being brought vnto the King in rayments of needle-worke, &c.

Doct. 4.

Prover. 4. 8. 9.

Psal. 45. 13. 14.

First, all silkes, and siluer, gold, pearles, and precious stones, are but corruptible matter, at the first received from

Reason 1.

G

wormes,

Prover. 22. 6.

Ephes. 6. 4.

2 Tim. 3. 15.

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Reason 1.  
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trade of his way, and when hee is old hee will not depart from it, whereunto that precept to the Ephesians is agreeable: Parents, bring up your children in instruction and information of the Lord.

Timothy was so dealt with, and accordingly inioyed the benefit of it: He knew the Scriptures of a childe, and by them was made wise to salvation, through the faith that is in Christ Iesus. And Salomons education was after the same manner (for his parents made him not a wanton, though they loved him tenderly, but faithfully taught him) and therefore the blessing of God was abundant vnto him, for the increase of his wisdom and vnderstanding.

First, in respect of God this is expedient, vpon whom wee haue beene cast from our mothers wombe, and therefore it is equall that wee should cast our selues vpon him from thence, that the first fruits of our youth, strength, capacity, wit, memory & wisdom, may be sanctified vnto him.

Secondly, opportunity calleth for it, this age is most commodious for the rudiments of Religion, and the foundation of vertues: young plants be flexible, and easily made straight: vices may be weeded out with lesse paines, if they be plucked vp before they haue taken any deepe footing in the heart: many wilde creatures are made tame, when they are taken from their damme steates, or nests.

Thirdly, danger should drive vs vnto it; for if we learne not wisdom while we are yong, cyther we neuer learne it, or much more hardly, when wee beginne not before the *will day*: And but few in comparison of the multitude, that haue bestowed their youthfull dayes in the delight of sinne conuert their riper yeares to the seruices of God, though some yet doe obtaine grace and mercy to be reformed.

Fourthly, children are mortall as well as elder men, subiect to punishment also, both before the iudgement seate of God, and in this life, if they be wicked, as the vntimely deaths of two-and-forty vnhappy Boyes that mocked at *Elisba* declarereth. They were old enough to deride the Lords messenger, saying; *Ascend thou bald-head, ascend thou bald-head:*

2 Kings 2. 24.

and



and therefore they were not too young to be plagued for their lewdnesse. Childhood was no protection for them against the curse which was denounced by the Prophet, or the slaughter which was made by the Beares.

Instruction, that the consideration of all this moue Parents and Ouer-seers to looke to their youth betimes, before Sathan hath by his corrupters marred all. So shall they performe the duties of best loue, to their children: so shall they provide for the future prosperity both of Church and common-wealth (for it maketh much for the good of the flocke, that the Lambes be well looked vnto) and so shall they make their owne life and death to be much more comfortable. And children are to be admonished to be teachable, so soone as their gouernours see it seasonable to teach them: and those that by parents remissenesse, or their owne indocility and vntowardnes haue lost the morning of their age, by tarrying so long before they tooke their iourney towards heauen, let them hence-forth redeeme the time, and trauell the faster in the wayes of vnderstanding and obedience. But alas, what shall wee say to the age wee now liue in, where too few are carefull hereof, either parents to teach, or children to learne the feare of the Lord: So little hope there is of propagating of piety from fathers to children at this day, that wee may iustly feare lest in the succeeding generations it will grow very scarce and rare to be found: other vses,  
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Vse. 1.

It belongeth to both the parents to informe their children in godlinesse and religion.

Dott. 3.

If the care of the sonne must heare his fathers instruction: the tongue of the father must not faile to instruct: If the mothers teaching is not to be despised, the mother hath then the place of a teacher. *David* gaue precepts to *Salomon*, and so did *Bathsheba*: that which his father taught him, he taught others, and published the same to the whole church of God, and so he did in like manner that which hee learned of his mother.

Pro. 4. 4. and  
31. 1. &c.

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Iob 28 13. 14.

wormes, and shells, and out of the earth, and after wrought by the art of man: but grace is of an heavenly nature, it groweth not in the ground, it is not to be found in the seas (as Iob testifieth,) The Lord graue it, and giue it; both the workmanship and donation of it is altogether by a diuine hand.

2.

Cantic. 1. 8.

Indg. 8. 28.

Apocal. 19. 8.

Secondly, the worst weare sumptuous apparell, as well as the best, and the vile more commonly than they that are truly honourable. Pharaohs horses had costly trappings, and the Midianites Camels had chaines of gold about their neckes; but grace is granted by priuiledge, and appropriated onely to the Lords Nobles: None are arrayed with pure fine linnen, and shining, which is the righteousness of Saints, but such as Christ vouchsafeth worthy to be matched with himselfe in marriage.

3.

Thirdly, externall robes and ornaments, are very admirable and beautiful in mens eyes onely, and many times most respected of those which are most vaine, and fantastick: but God and Gods Angells, and his godly people doe highly esteeme of grace and goodnesse in whomsoever it shineth.

4.

Fourthly, gay clothes, & iewels, will or may be worne out, or lost, or stolne, or spent, or by some other meanes alienated from their owners: for there was a time when the dainty daughters of Ierusalem had their sweet-balls, and bracelets, and tablets, and earerings, and costly apparrell, and vailles, and fine linnen, and hoodes, and lawnes, &c. and there was a time after that, when the Lord tooke them all away, and in steede of sweet saour, there was a stinking, and in steede of a girdle, a rent, and in steede of dressing the haire, baldnesse, and burning in steede of beauty.

Use 1.

Instruction, that forasmuch as there is such difference betweene these, and the one doth so farre excell the other; then make a wise choise of the better, and rather be clad with Grace, than with gold, or whatsoever else seemeth specious and goodly to humane senses. The greatest pompe & brauery of the world without this, is but as a frowlie garment, full of ragges and patches, in comparison of this: and who



who would strippe himselfe out of a Princes robe, to clothe himselfe with a beggars cloake? and yet so do all light, vaine, proud, and garish people, which rather desire fine coates to shew to men, than faithfull hearts in the sight of God; falsly imagining themselves, and others, to be so farre honourable; as they are richly decked, and *vile rayment* to be a sufficient cause why the best men should be bately vsed. But let these gay gallants remember that proud *Herods* royall apparell, could not preserue his bowells from the mouthes of contemptible vermin: nor the rough garments or skins which *Eliab*, and *John Baptist* ware, did any way impaire their estimation or authoritie.

Verse 10. *My sonne, if sinners doe intice thee, consent thou not.*

**T**His verse, and the nine next following, containe an excellent caueat, to take heed of, and auoyde those means which make the instructions of parents, or other gouernors fruitlesse, and of none effect, namely, pernicious, and pestilent inticements. This matter he doth heere propound in the generall, and more particularly amplifie afterwards, in that which followeth.

In the generall hee forewarneth his sonne, that is, euerie godly man, and such as addicteeth himselfe to wisdom and vertue, to beware of seducers, shewing both what manner of persons they are; *viz. Sinners*, and how to be auoyded by not consenting vnto them, or giuing the least eare, or liking to their flatteries, and deceitfull perswasions.

*My sonne, &c.]* when any man beginneth to take good waies, hee is like to be resisted by euill counsells. See Chap. 9. 15.

*Doct. 1.*

*If sinners, &c.]* They that be naught themselves are ready also to peruert others. See Chap. 16. 29.

*Doct. 2.*

*Consent thou not, &c.]* It is good before temptations, to be resolu'd not to yeelde vnto them.

*Doct. 3.*

*Salomon* gluethe this precept to be learned; before thou

Job 31.13

Psal. 119. 106.

Reason. 1.

2.

Use. 1.

be set vpon by deceiuers, to the end thou mayest be in a readinesse, and the better prepared to withstand their practises when thou shalt be assaulted. And heereof many Woorthies; euen the chiefe, and choise of holy men, haue left examples to all posterities. As *Iob* pleading for himselfe and maintayning his owne vprightnesse, against his friends now playing the parts of aduersaries, protesteth that he had *made a couenant with his eyes*, and would not giue libertie to his minde, so much as to *thinke on a maide*. And *David* also professed to the Lord, who well knew the faithfulnessse of his heart, and truth of his lippes; that *hee had sworne, and would performe it, to keepe Gods righteous iudgements.*

First, it much confirmeth the heart, in the resistance of euery euill, when he hath after a sort abiured the same, and entred into bonds, and to couenants, for constant obedience vnto the Lord. Whereby it doth not onely repell temptations so as they shall take none effect, but abhorreth them also with hatred and detestation, like as a faithfull wife, doth lothe all sollicitations to villany and treachery against her husband. Neither will it onely deny consent to any vnlawfull motions, but be alwayes strongly fenced and furnished with inuincible arguments, and reasons of refusall.

Secondly, hee that hath not yet concluded with his owne soule, resolutely to withstand the assaults of Sathan, the motions of sinne, and the perswasions of sinners, hath due cause to doubt of his owne power, and to dread the force of his foes that shall assaile him: And assistance he cannot comfortably expect from God, nor confidently call vpon him for help, sithence hee vndertaketh the protection of none, which are not his sworne and trusty souldiers.

Instruction to be as prouident, and well prepared to repell the smoothe perswasions of Satan, and fained friends, as the violent assaults of our foes, and professed enemies: and feare our owne corrupt nature, and the perill of euill company, no lesse than pestilent persons, which haue the plague-sore vpon them: And therefore euery morning to take some preseruatiues next our hearts, against these dangers,

gers, lest wee should be infected before we be aware, sithence no disease is more contagious, no constitution more apt to take infection, and no sickenes, or death more fearefull or grievous: Get knowledge then and vnderstanding, that it may keepe thee: let other mens faults be admonitions to thee: trie thy selfe, and take notice of the pronenesse of thine owne heart, to that which is euill, and hearken with heedfulnesse vnto forewarnings, which *Peter* vpon confidence of his owne power neglecting, was soone after circumuented by his aduersary.

Reproofe of them that are attentiuē, and tractable to the corruptest counsells, listening to nothing with greater delight, nor performing any thing with so great a desire. It is the common practise of many, to prepare entertainment for the diuell, and seduces, by playing the diuells part, and seducing themselves, then when they are not tempted of others. For, doe they not beate their braines, and busie their heads continually in the contemplation of profites or pleasures, or promotions, or of such things as they most lust after, proposing to themselves an Heauen full of *happinesse*, perfect happinesse in the inioyment thereof? And then welcome is hee, and much shall he be made of, which will incite them to that which is so acceptable, and informe them withall, how they may be able to compasse it.

And thus then they open the pores of their heart to the infection of sinners, and sharpen their appetites so that they be ready to bite as soone as euer they haue the least kenne of Satans baite.

Verse 11. *If they say, Come with vs, wee will lay waste for bloud, and lie primily for the innocent, without perill.*

**H**ere followeth the particular handling of the former matter, in this verse, and diuers of the rest that follow, wherein are set down, first the inticing speeches of sinners, as it were motives to winne consent, and afterwards the whole-some dissuasion of the holy Ghost, as a retentiuē to holde them



them backe from yeelding. In both which wee haue the counsell, or that whereunto they doe moue vs, and the seuerall reasons whereupon the same is grounded. The motions of the wicked are to worke mischief, and practise cruelty by cunning, which the Spirit of God setteth downe according to their meaning, in odious termes, such as their owne lippes would not so apertly vtter, and especially at the first: for it were enough to fright and discourage one, yet not fleshed in sinne, to heare such words: *Let vs lay waite for blond*; vndoe men, cyther by taking away their liues, or hurting, if not vtterly overthrowing their estates, which is their purpose, but not alway their pretence: *and lie primly*, like hunters for beasts, and fowlers for birds, or theeuers by the way side, and enemies in ambushment, dissemble and conceale our malicious, treacherous, and hurtfull plots, vntill wee haue aduantage: *for the innocent*, whom God iustificieth and approoueth of and who haue deserued no such intreaty at the hands of their oppressours; whom clamorous tongues notwithstanding spare not to deprave, as if they were culpable of hainous offences: *without perill*; for so doe the learned take the word heere vsed in some other places, as *Iob 9. 17.* And hauing hitherto declared both the matter and manner of their allurements, hee now beginneth to relate their arguments, whereby they goe about to inueigle the simple: and this first from the safety of the attempt, that they may take it in hand, and proceede in it freely, and without feare of punishment, which is brought in the beginning, and placed in the fore-front, to animate them against all dread and discouragements at the on-set.

*Doctr. 1.*

The Lord iudgeth of wicked mens wayes, according as they be, and not after the pretences that are made of them.

Farre is it from their purpose to apply their mouth professedly to publish the bloody cruelty of their mindes; and violent men are seldome heard to giue a voluntary testimony of the innocency of those that are oppressed by them. They neuer bragge more of their mercy and iustice, than when they are felt to be most iniurious: and commonly they

they complaine of them to be very euill men, whom they meane to intreate in a very euill manner. But God bringeth them in, saying, that which they should speake, if they would speake the truth plainly without dissimulation: *Wee will lay waite for bloud: and lie priuily for the innocent.* And he that heere doth thus discover their horrible iniquity, doth likewise in other Scriptures, as much lay open their hideous, yee secret, close, and hidden impiety: As where hee chargeth them to say to God, *Depart from vs: For we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes. Who is the Almighty, that wee should serue him? And what profit should wee haue, if wee should pray vnto him?* Iob 21.14.

And, it is in vaine to serue God: and, what profit is it, that wee haue kept his commandement, and that wee walked humbly before the Lord of hostes? And where hee accuseth them for saying vnto the Prophets, *Prophecy not vnto vs right things, but speake flattering things vnto vs: prophecy errors, depart out of the way: goe aside out of the path: cause the holy one of Israel to cease from vs.* Malac. 3.14.  
Esay 30.10.11

First, hee beholdeth all the intents and motions of the heart, and therefore better knoweth their mindes proiects, and purposes than themselues doe, and so is neuer deceiued in them. Reason 1.

Secondly, he fore-seeth th' effects and consequents that will insue vpon their words and actions, all the mischief thereof is knowne vnto him. 2.

Confutation of their erroneous expectations, which hope with as great facility to illude the eyes of God, as they are wont to abuse the eares of men: as though he could sound no deeper into their practises, by seeing what they meane, than mortall creatures are able to doe by hearing what they say. Thinke they by the cloake or visard of guilefull speeches to couer their ambition, their malice, their couetousnesse, or other corruptions, from the sight of him, which is as well omniscious, as omnipotent, whose knowledge is equall to his power? And no better a course doe they take for themselues, which being impious and wicked, appeale from  
mens

*Vse. 1.*

mens rebukes to Gods owne sentence, trusting to finde him more fauorable to their soules, & lesse displeased with their sinnes, than their ministers, or neighbours, or friends, that rebuke them. For as their rebellion is most against him, by the contempt and transgression of his righteous law, so is his iustice most against that, with perfect hatred and detestation.

2.

Instruction, that therefore we extenuate our faults no more, to make them seeme small: (for so we may cause the Lord to discouer the grieuousnesse of them) but let vs finde out as much euill by our selues as we can, and acknowledge as much as wee finde, that he may passe by, and pardon it.

Doctr. 2.

*Lay waite &c.*] When cruell men intend most mischief, they commonly make the least shew thereof. See Chap. 12. verse 6.

Doctr. 3.

*For the innocent, &c.*] None are so much subiect to wrongs and iniuries, as they which least deserue them.

The more harmelesse any man is, the more harmes are wont to be attempted against him.

Psal. 11. 2. 3.

*The wicked bend their bowe, and make ready their arrows upon the string, that they may secretly shoote at the vpright in heart. For the foundations shall be cast downe: but what hath the righteous done? Yea truth faileth, and he that refraineth from euill, maketh himselfe a prey.*

Esay 59. 15.

Neuer had any man so many and great indignities offered him, as Christ had, the onely perfect and absolute righteous one, from whom alone all that will be reputed righteous, or liue righteously, must receiue their righteousness. And they that came nearest vnto him, and were most like him in grace and innocencie, haue in all ages beene most maligned, and made likest vnto him in troubles and sufferings: as appeareth by the complaints of *David*, of *Elijah*, of *Jeremy*, and of other the Prophets: and by the predictions of Christ, and the histories, and testimonies of the new Testament, concerning the condition of *Paul*, and the rest of the Apostles.

Reason 1.

First, a blamelesse conuersation hath at all times beene offensive to vnrighteous men, which doe nothing but offend: and therefore they seldome pursue their enemies with



with greater hostility & fiercenes than they doe their harmlesse neighbours and brethren.

Secondly, they are diuers wayes imboldned to set vpon these, of whom the greater part are poore, and not able to defend themselues, and friendlesse also, hauing little protection from others: and full of meekenesse, so that albeit their power could serue them, yet their consciences would not permit them to take reuenge.

It may seeme then to be safer, and more agreeable to wisdom, for to walke in the broad way, with the multitude, and to sinne with the wicked, sithence iustice, and vprightnesse cause enemies and troubles. Who would expose himselfe to enuy, hatred, reproaches, and molestations, by restrayning himselfe of that which his flesh doth desire, when hee might purchase to himselfe, both fauour, and peace, by following his delights, and taking his liberty?

This indeede might seeme a sufficient cause to confirme the lewd man in his licentiousnes, and to dishearten the godly in his goodnes, if the one were destitute of a deliuerer, and the other free from a Iudge, and neither reward nor punishment remained for any: but forasmuch as the Lord, is a guardian, and vndertaketh the cause of the righteous, how weake soeuer, and as a reuenger opposeth himselfe against the wicked, though neuer so mighty; therefore the righteous (notwithstanding all his aduersaries, and the worst that they can doe) must needs be in better case than the wicked, with his companions, friends, and fauourers.

Wolues and foxes are stronger than sheepe, and craftier also, but not so safe, nor so well provided for, because the Shepheard taketh care for the welfare of the flocke, & hunterh after their liues: Let vs heare him speaking to this point which spake by inspiration, and experience, both foreknowing his words to be true, and seeing the accomplishment of them afterwards: *Without cause haue they hid the pit and their net for me: without cause haue they digged a pit for*

2.

*Obiection.**Answers.*Psal. 30. 7. 8. 9.  
Cc.

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Ec.



my soule. Destruction shall come upon him at vnawares, and the net that hee hath layed prinily, shall take him, hee shall fall into the same destruction. Then my soule shall be ioyfull in the Lord: it shall reioyce in his saluation. All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like vnto thee, which deliuerest the poore from him that is too strong for him: yea the poore, and him that is in misery from him that spoileth him?

Instruction, that when thou emptiest thy selfe of euill, and beginnest to grow better, thou store thy selfe with prudence, and be made more cautelous and wary of their plots, and stratagems: and vse the helpe, and take the benefit of faith, which will support thy heart, and minister power to vndergoe that with patience, which thou canst not preuent by wisdom.

And as there is a combination, and conspiracy of cruell spoylers against the righteous, to make them their prey, and to swallow them vp, so it is needful that there should be concord among the righteous themselves, yea a coniunction & vnion; euery one being a counsellor, a shield, and arme of defence to another.

Doct. 4.

*Without perill, &c.*] Hope of safety is one of the principall causes of all wickednes.

Jerem. 5. 12.

Who goeth about any mischief, but he concludeth with himselfe, neuer to be espied, or knowne, neuer to be brought forth to shame or punishment? so they imboldned themselves in Ieremies time, (though denying the Lord, as the Prophet accuseth them) saying, *It is not hee, neither shall the plague come vpon vs, neyther shall wee see sword or famine. And the Prophets be as the winde, and the word is not in them. And the like was done in Dauids time, He saith in his heart, I shall neuer be moued, nor be in danger.* By this reason the Harlot ouercame the young man, and brought him to the slaughter: *My husband is gone as farre off, and will not returne in haste, hee is sure enough, saith she.* And by this that cursed counsell of the Iewish Priests, perswaded the souldiers to belie Christ, and his Disciples, and to say, that they had stolen him out of the Sepulchre, that if the worst came, that

Psal. 11. 6.

Prover. 7. 19.

could

could come, they would doe well enough with the Iudge, and saue them harmelesse.

First, if the dread of danger be remooued, the feare of God, which is a strong and necessary band to lincke his people to himselfe, and detaine them from euill, is either wholly abolished, or much hindred from it working.

Secondly, take that away, and sinne will seeme desireable, Satan shall haue full hearing, and be credited in all his motions, as a wise and friendly counsellor, that seeketh mens commodities, delight, rest, ease, aduancement, and welfare in euery thing, as by his successe with *Eue* appeareth.

Conuiction of many, yea of the most part, and greatest number of people to be giuen ouer to this dilusion, that they may take their fill of filthy lusts, and worke all manner of wickednes, though neuer so erroneous and hatefull; and yet presume of secrecy, as not to be found out, or looke for impunity, as not to be plagued. *Wickednesse saith of the wicked, in the hearts, almost of all godly and ciuill men, that there is no feare of God before his eyes.* What sinne is there of grosse prophanesse, of blasphemy, of Sabbath-breaking, of arrogancy, of cruelty, of whoredome, of couetousnes, of all kinde of falshood, iniustice and iniquitie, which in these dayes maketh not a publike proclamation, in euery place, as being openly committed?

Instruction, for any which would escape the baites of sinne, whereby so many thousands of millions are caught and destroyed, to make *Iobs* conclusion, that the discouery of euery crime is as certaine as the practise, and the iudgement for it as sure as the guiltines of it. *For what portion (saith he) should I haue of God from above? and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high? Is not destruction to the wicked, and strange punishment, to the workers of iniquitie? doth he not behold my wayes and tell all my steppes?* Let vs then as wee desire not to be seduced, take heede that wee suffer not Satan to fasten his perswasion vpon vs, and inchaunt vs with this charme of secret, and safe sinning, but let vs know for a surety that wicked deeds wil cry out and be clamorous,

Reason 1.

2.

Vse 1.

Psal. 36. 1.

2.

Psal. 94. 9. 10.

and our consciences will cry out and accuse vs, & who knoweth whether they will not prouoke vs to bewray our selues openly? And though thy conscience could be burnt to death with an hot yron, yet the liuing God will bring all secrets to light out of darkenes: *Shall not he know that teacheth man knowledge? And shall not he see that made the eye? And shall not he correct that chastiseth the nations?* hee hateth all euill with a perfect hatred, because hee is perfectly righteous: hee is the Iudge of the world, and his office is to plague sinners: hee is omnipotent, and hath power sufficient against the greatest: and though he forbear long, yet hee will strike home at the last.

3.

Deuter. 13. 8.

Deuter. 37. 7.

Admonition to them that haue charge of others, either publique or domesticall, that they giue not encouragement to offenders, by too much indulgence lest by remission in their gouernement, they corrupt their flocke, and make themselves accessary to their offences: the shewing of foolish pittie, though but to a few, turneth often to great cruelty, and that to many: Remember what is said in the Law, *Thine eye shall not pittie him: So shalt thou take away euill from among you, &c.*

Verse 12. *We will swallow them up a line, like a grane, euen whole, as those that goe downe into the pit.*

**N**OW followeth the second reason of these tempters, drawne from the facilitie and easines of their exploit, to prevent the doubts that might arise against their proceedings, for the difficulty of their attempt, and the doubtfulness of the successe; because many that could be content to doe any euill that may bring good to themselves, or hurt to the innocent; yet for feare of foile, repulse, or euill successe, are the more vnwillingly drawne vnto it. Now therfore inticers euermore take this scruple away, and make the simple belecue that they can effect it without any trouble. They are able with as much ease, and as little resistance, to overcome and prey vpon the liuing, whom they take in hand to

vndoe,



vndoe, as the graue doth receiue, and consume the dead corps, that are buried in it.

Vngodly men presume they shall speede well, how lewd soeuer their enterprises be.

Doct. 1.

The proud Egyptians came bragging after the poore Israelites, saying, *Wee will pursue, wee will overtake them, wee will diuide the spoile, our lust shall be satisfied upon them, we will draw our swords, our hands shall destroy them.*

Exodus 15.9.

Iesabel sware, that shee would make a speedy dispatch of *Elijah*: And the forty that had vowed *Pauls* death, thought themselves so sure that they would neither eate nor drinke vntill they had rid him out of the way.

First, they are proud and puffed vp with vaine confidence, trusting to their wit and policie, their practise and experience, their power and riches, their number and multitude: they recount their alliance and kinred, and what friends they can make, by whose countenance and credit, they thinke to compasse great matters; and if need so require, out-countenance great men.

Reason 1.

Secondly, they are ignorant, or not perswaded, that God disposeth of all affaires, by his prouidence, according to his will.

2.

Esay 10.7.

Thirdly, the Lord in his righteous iudgement, giueth them ouer to that illusion many times, vpon their disappointment to vex them, and shame them, and that for the ruine of the reprobate: and the repentance of them that shall be saued.

3.

Instruction; to be vterly vnlike to them, both in actions, and expectations, that our workes be voide of cruelty, and iniustice, and our hearts be free from proud conceits, and immodesty, to do nothing that is not agreable to loue: and equity; and yet not arrogantly allot our selues such successe as our selues desire, but be satisfied with that which the Lord prescribeth. Go to now (saith Saint Iames) yet that say, to day, or to morrow, we will goe into such a City, and continue there a yeare, and buy and sell, and get gaine, and yet yee cannot tell what shall be on the morrow, &c. Doth it become a

IJe. 1.

Iames 4.13.

mortall man, a base creature, so full of folly, iniquity and impotency, presumptuously to take vpon him Gods office, and make a decree for the future euents of matters? Is it not equall that they should finde the vanity of their imaginati-  
ons, and with sorrow, and shame be defeated of their settled hopes and purposes? And that vnmercifull and bloudy men may so be all the righteous ought to importune the Lord with their prayers; for otherwise, if their might were answerable to their mindes, it would be too true which they say, they will be as good, or rather as bad as their words; like open sepulchres to swallow vp; and deuoure the poore, and yet remaine still vnfatiate. Obserue how aptly the holy Ghost hath deciphered both their desires and practises, by resembling them vnto graues? For doe they not eate vp and waste all that come into their panches? Remaine they not (like *Pharaohs* ill-fauoured leane kine) full of neede and beggary, after they haue deuoured many mens estates? And though plaguy yeares bring them neuer so many booties, continue they not vnfatiable, still hungry and rauen-  
ing after much more?

2.

Consolation, that because they promise to themselves so much, as not onely like beasts to bite the innocent, but euen like graues to consume them: because a smaller prey will not content them; but they must haue their houses full of other mens best substance; therefore the Lord will re-  
strain them of their willes, and disappoynt their expectations, for hee *resisteth the proud*, and detaineth not onely grace but power from them. As by the soyle of the brag-  
ging King of *Siria*, and the confusion of the insolent King of *Affiria* appeareth: were it not so, all the faithfull would be buried as it were in their bowells: a godly man, a righte-  
ous man, a man of any vertue, or ciuility would scarce be found liuing in any good estate vpon the earth, the world so swarmeth in all places with worldlings which would be  
spoil-ers.

Verse 13. *Wee shall finde all precious riches, and fill our houses with spoyle.*

**T**His verse containeth their third reason, which is taken from the commodity that they shall get by their attempt, not pelfe nor trumpery, nor trifles of no valew, but riches of all sorts, and those which are precious, and in abundance, wherewith they shall store their houses as Conquerors doe, when they haue the sacking of Cities and carry away the prey.

Respect of gaine is an inducement to much iniquitie, what is the euill which men will not enterprife, when they haue the hope, much more the assurance, of being enriched by it? Examples hereof we haue in *Gehezi*, in *Iudas*, in *Simon Magus*, in *Demetrius the Siluer-Smith of Ephesus*, & many others. The Apostles testimony in this matter is better known than regarded, *that they which will be rich fall into temptations and snares, and into many foolish and noysome lusts, which drowne men in perdition, and destruction. For the desire of money, is the roote of all euill, &c.* The diuell hath caught so many with this baite, both of Magistrates and Ministers, and men of all trades and conditions, that hee was in hope to haue preuailed with our Saviour Christ himselfe by it. This point shall be handled more at large in the nineteenth verse.

Doctr. 1.

Verse 14. *Thou shalt eate in thy lot among vs: wee will all haue one purse.*

**H**ere is an objection preuented, which the party tempted may thinke or say, that he shall take as much pains as others, but finde lesse gaines, seeing it is to be feared, that you being masters in this trade, and captaines in mischief, will challenge the most vnto your selues; and being many, and of an old confederacy, will make my part the least: *Answer.* Yea the boory shall be diuided most equally, and then according to the fashion of Merchants, wee will



will cast lots to determine each mans part, and that which is more, thou shalt in the meane time haue money of vs, if thou wantest to defray thy charges: thou shalt liue of our purse, and wee in the like case will of thine; we will haue a common bagge among vs.

*Doctrine.*

They which are most vnrighteous seeme yet sometimes iust and liberall to some.

*1. Sam. 25.*

*Nabal*, which was so franke in good cheare to his sheepshearers, as to make them *a feast like a King*, may be thought to haue kept touch with them also for their wages, and paid them their due, and yet is branded by the Holy-Ghost for a churle, and a currish miser.

*Reason 1.*

First, the worst are proud, and ambitious, and cometous of credit, and therefore few of them be willing to incurre the hatred and detestation of all men.

2.

Secondly, nature is not so fully extinguished in them, but that some sparkes thereof are yet aliue, which will compell them to make some of their friends partakers of that which they gather.

*Nahum 2. 12.*

The Prophet compareth the *Assyrians* to fierce and rauenous wilde beasts, and yet saith hee, *the Lyon did reare in peeces enough for his whelps, and worried for his Lyonesse, &c.*

3.

Thirdly, if they should professedly be iniurious to all, and kinde to none, none would be sociable with them, or in any their causes, be assisting vnto them. They cannot doe so much hurt, as they desire, without some helpe, and they cannot haue helpe without some requitall. And therefore they giue appearance of honesty and beneficence, so farre as may make for their owne good, and will serue their turne, and so farre forth euen the diuell will shew himselfe beneficiall, deale truely and performe his promise.

*Use.*

Instruction, not to be too swift and lauish in praising the bounty and hospitality of the wicked, sometimes to a few, when we see them otherwise oppressours of many. Thieues and robbers are knowne often to be prodigall in their expenses, and to pay the shot for all the company, and yet vnworthy to be called either bountifull, or liberall; and so

are

are the other to be termed mercifull or hospitall. But these  
quill mens examples, may serue to prouoke their bettersto  
true iustice, mercy, and liberality: For if they that are wor-  
kers of iniquity deale equally with any, it becommeth thee  
which art the seruant of God to doe so withall: if their pur-  
ses be alwayes open to ruffians and roisters the limbs of the  
diuell; let not thine be euer shut to thy godly poore bre-  
thren, the members of Christ, whom thou seest in necessity,  
and art able to relieue.

This kinde of corrupt community is mentioned in way  
of reproofe, and condemned as a dangerous baite of sinne;  
but that beneficence which is conferred vpon the Saints of  
God, is often commended and strictly commanded, and  
hath a promise of large recompence annexed vnto it: And  
here by obseruation of their exorbitant manner of largesse,  
wee may learne the right rules of sound liberality; as first,  
that thou must be good, and not a sinner as they were; if  
thou wilt haue the credit or comfort of thy goodnes.

Actes 4.34.  
Hebr. 13.16.  
Matth. 25.

It is recorded for the honor and euerlasting praise of the  
*Macedonians*, that (*praying Paul with great instance to receiue  
the grace and fellowship of ministring which is toward the Saints*)  
*they gaue themselves first vnto the Lord*. Secondly, thou  
must be most beneficiall to them that are best, if they stand  
in as much need of thy help as others. Them especially will  
Christ acknowledge at the last day, and that to their prayse  
and promotion, which haue fed, clothed, harboured, or  
any way comforted him: and who are they but those which  
haue shewed that mercy and kindnes, to his, euen to his  
poore brethren, who belecue in him? All the Ale and Wine  
that is bestowed vpon drunkards: all the feasts and ban-  
quets that are made for gluttons: all the money or lands  
that are spent vpon blasphemers, idolaters, or any other,  
that walke inordinately are mis-spent and wasted, no recom-  
pence from God remaineth for them. Thirdly, beware, that  
vnder the pretence of kindnes, of curtesie, or a liberall mind,  
thou seeke not to peruert men, and corrupt their hearts, as  
to infect them with popery, or erroneous opinions, or (like

1. Corint. 8.4.5.

these here spoken against) to intice them to thefts and robberies, or to allure them to gaming and vnthriftnes, or to induce them to Tauernes or Tipling-houses, or to inforce them to drinke immoderately in thine owne house: little cause haue they to render thee thanks for thy cost, to whom thy cost is made a poison, and like to cost them their welfare and saluation. And lastly, contrary to the course of these cruell spoilers, vpon whomsoever thou bestowest ought, or for what purpose soeuer, be sure that thou haue a right in that which thou giuest, and a lawfull title to it, and not robbe one to relieue another.

He that is an vnrighteous getter can neuer be deemed a mercifull giuer, vnlesse with *Zacheus*, he make full restitution to those whom he hath wronged.

Verse 15. *My Sonne, walke not in the way with them: refraine thy foote from their path.*

**N**OW are we come to the retentive, or dissuasion; whereby the Spirit of God withholdeth his children from consenting to the cunning inticements of sinfull seducers, which he first beginneth with a dehortation, and then confirmeth with arguments.

The dehortation is vsed in this Verse as an Antidote or counterpoyson against their virulent tongues, directly opposite to their counsell or call: *Come* (say they) *and goe with vs*; *My sonne*, (saith he) *walke not in the way with them*, conuerse not with such in friendship, familiarity, or fellowship, renounce their acquaintance, and haue little to doe with them: *refraine thy foote from their path*; be not where they haunt, or are, if thou canst choose.

*Doctrin.*

As well the company, as the conuersation of the wicked is to be eschewed.

Beware of commerce and society with them, decline as much as thou maiest from their very presence, except thou be as a Philisrion to them, or necessity of some duty of religion, or of thy vocation, or loue, or of humanity, command thee



hee to be with them. Many wise men haue beene seduced heere, many strong men haue fallen vpon this ground, for it is slippery. This, if there were no other cause, might iustly detaine vs from stage-playes, and other exercises of the same nature, which ill company is wont to frequent. And this may admonish vs to be well aduised whom wee admit into our houses, and into whose houses wee betake our selues to dwell, but chiefly with whom we ioine our selues in marriage, the strongest bond of humane societic. See Chap. 9. 6. verse 13. 20.

Verse 16. *For with their feete they runne to euill, and make haste to shed blood.*

**T**He deceiuers come armed with guilefull shewes of reason, like swords, and offensive weapons to wound mens consciences by drawing them into mischief; and therefore the holy Ghost offereth vs substantiall and forcible arguments, like shields, and defensive weapons, to resist them: whereof we haue one heere, taken from their hurtfull cruel disposition, which appeareth by their effects, the *doing of euill*, and the *shedding of blood*; especially by the maner thereof, in that they runne and make such haste thereunto. And this assumed out of their owne words in the eleuenth verse.

It is the property of the wicked to be prest and swift to *Doctrins.* all that is euill.

They creepe like Snayles, or limpe as if they were lame, and draw their legges after them, when they are called to any good seruice: but skippe with Hindes feet, and flie with Swallows wings. When they goe about any matters of mischief. Heereof wee haue an example in *Rehum* and *Shimsai*, who are said to goe up to Ierusalem in all the haste, to cause the Iewes to cease from building of the Temple. And the dancing minion went with speede to *Herod*, and asked the head of *Iohn Baptist*. And they were minded to make little delay in the execution of their bloody designe, who in their combination bound themselues by oath, *neither to eate nor drinke, untill they had killed Paul*. Neither were the Sodomites long

*Psal. 50. 18.*

*Esay. 59. 6.*

*Rom. 3. 15.*

*Ezra 4. 23.*

*Mat. 6. 25.*

*Acts 13. 12.*

Genesis 16.

Reason 1.

Prover. 4. 27.

2.

Use 1.

Psa. 119. 32. 58

2.

in assembling themselves, but were quickly come together out of all parts of the citie, for the attempting of that most vnnaturall and filthy fact vpon Lot and the Angells.

First, sinne is pleasant to sinfull nature, alluring their hearts and affections vnto it, as dainty foode doth the appetite; *For they eate the bread of iniquity, and drinke the wine of violence.*

Secondly, Sathan hath them in subiection, and thrusteth them forwards as slaues, and bond-men to all enormities,

Thirdly, they feare the preuention of their practises, and therefore hasten so fast, to preuent all the impediments and interruptions thereof.

Instruction, to teach the godly wisdom and warinesse to escape the euill which they desire to doe them, as Paul preuented the practises of those forty conspirators; remembering alwayes, that they will haste, and neglect no opportunity of working mischiefe. And withall to flie as fast from euill, as they post to it: and to hie with as much speede to goodnesse, as they runne from it: For the Master which wee serue is better than theirs, our worke is better, our wages is better, our companions are better, all our encouragements are better, and why then should wee be slouthfuller and slower? *I will runne the way of thy commandements* (saith the Prophet) *when thou shalt enlarge my heart: And I made haste, and delayed not to keepe thy commandements.* If we would not haue the Lord to make delay of his help and mercies to vs, it standeth with wisdom not to protract the time before we performe our seruices to him.

Consolation for them, who (when they doe any euill, as every one doth too too often) are rather drawne into it by the violence of temptations, or of naturall corruption, than willingly runne into it with delight. That which they most desire, and direct their course vnto, they come too short of, and what they loath, and labour to decline from, they fall vpon and dash against, to their woe and sorrow. See Chap. 10. 23.

Verse 17. *For in vaine is the net spread before the eyes of all that hath wing.*

**A**S before hee aduiseeth the godly to be cautelous, and not to yeelde to the inticements of these wicked tempters, because all their waies tend to the doing of hurt: so heere hee disswadeth them, by another argument, from the vncertaine euent of their attempts, contradicting their bragges, and absolute promises which they made to themselves of prosperous successe, in the twelfth and thirteenth verses, and this hee doth by a similitude: although they be as confident of speeding well, as if they had gotten the prey already: yet can they no more assuredly say that their counsells and purposes shall take effect, than an vnskilfull Fowler (which laieth his snares and grinnets openly) can certainly affirme, that he will catch the birds that flie by, and obserue his nets.

*Net spread, &c.]* Malicious and crafty men apply themselves as busily to intrappe the innocent as Fowlers doe to catch birds.

*Doctr. I.*

This did *Micah* marke, and much complaine of saying, *They all lie in waite for bloud: euery man hunteth his brother with a net.* And the Church of God at that time, when the *Lamentations* were written, did both see and feelee, and groane vnder this, and publickly bemoane it, saying; *Mine enemies chased me sore like a Bird, without cause.*

*Micah 7.2.*

*Lament. 3.52.*

First, they thinke themselves more annoyed with honest men, which obserue and detest their enormous behauiour, than with any kind of fowles, though neuer so rauinous and giuen to deuouring.

*Reason. I.*

Secondly, it is their game and sport, to intangle any that are faithfull, and vpright of heart: such is their delight therein, that they finde themselves ill for want of refreshing, when they faile of it: *their sleepe goeth from them, unlesse they haue caused some to fall.*

2.

Thirdly, they hope to make a gaine of it: for diuers times

3.



Jerem. 5. 26, 27

it seemeth commodious, and profitable to them for a time, as *Jeremy* testifieth; Among my people are found wicked persons, that lay waite, as he that setteth snares: they haue made a pit to catch men: As a cage is full of birdes, so are their houses full of deceit: they are become great, and waxed rich.

Use.

Instruction: that a good man be in no place, but where he ought to be; for there onely may he looke for protection; and where soeuer he is, let him be circumspect for his safety, as well as sincere for innocency: auoyd the venome, and poison of the serpent, but learne his wisdom, and imitate the harmelesnesse of the Dove, but shunne her simplicity.

Dott. 2.

In vaine, &c.] The successe of the wicked in their attempts, is seldome answerable to their hopes.

Psal. 7. 14.

What, and how much these hurtfull miscreants expected to gaine by their craft and cruelty, themselues professed before, when they vnderooke to swallow vp men alieue, and fill their houses with their riches: and what small cause there is of so great glorying, being grounded as it were vpon the bare sight of a bird in a bush, is heere apparent, besides the manifold examples and testimonies euery where for the same purpose. Behold (saith one) hee shall trauaile with wickednesse: for he hath conceiued mischief, but he shall bring forth a lie, &c. And, the Lord (saith another) scattereth the deuises of the crafty, so that their hands cannot accomplish that which they enterprise. He taketh the wise in their craftinesse, and the counsell of the wicked is made foolish. They meete with darkenesse in the day time, and grope at noone-day, as in the night, but hee saueeth the poore from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the violent man.

Iob 5. 12, 13.  
&c.

Reason 1.

Iere. 11. 18 19.

First, Gods prouidence perpetually watcheth for the defence of his people, and many times discovereth to them the euills that are intended against them, as when they had sworne *Pauls* death, and concluded together of *Ieremies*, as his owne words make manifest: The Lord taught mee, and I knew it, euen thou shewedst mee their practises. But I was like a Lamb, or a Bullocke, that is brought to the slaughter, and I knew not that they had deuised this against mee, saying, Let vs destroy

*stroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and cut him out of the land of the living, that his name may be no more in memory.*

Secondly, his power and wisdom, without which nothing taketh effect, doth continually accompany his providence, either to effect that which hee would have brought to passe, or to stay that which hee would have to be crossed: or establish that which hee would have to stand: or to overthrow that which hee would have to fall. If the mere detention of his blessing be enough to frustrate whatsoever any man doth purpose or take in hand, much more shall that be brought to nought, against which he directeth his curse, and opposeth his wisdom and power?

Incouragement for righteous men, who have good consciences, with good causes not to be daunted at the forces or fierceness of the wicked, how cunning soever they be, or confident to prevaile in their malicious enterprises. Doe not thou oppress thy selfe with needlesse feares, as they illude themselves with frivolous hopes: but when they threate what they will doe, and vaunt what they can doe, returne them the answer which Benhadad had from the King of Israell: *Let not him that girdeth his harnesse, boast, as hee that putteth it off.* If their might were matchable to their malice, there would not one good man be left aliue, the race and generation of the godly would be destroyed: for the multitude of the Fowlers doth incomparably exceede the number of the birds.

2.

Vse.

1 King. 10. 11.

Verse 18. *Moreover they lay for their owne blood, and lie privily for their owne lives.*

**T**O the former two reasons, he addeth in these words, a third, from the danger and perill of their plots, that the greatest hurt is like to redound to themselves: they would shed blood, and so they shall, but it is their owne; they vse all their Art to take away life, and make a slaughter, and that they shall doe, but they are the men to be killed, themselves must be slain: And where then is the safety, which they so much

much presumed of, and gaue warrant for in the cleauenth  
verse?

Doctr. I.

All hurtfull persons doe most hurt to themselves.

They trouble others with smoake, and burne vpon themselves with fire: they lash others on the fingers with twigs, and pierce the caule of their owne hearts with swords. So did *Pharaoh*, and his army: So did *Zenacherb*, and his army: So did *Benhadad*, and his army: So did *Haman*, and *Doeg*, and so did the aduersaries of *Daniell*, and the enemies of *Shadrach*, *Mesbach*, and *Abednego*. For further prooffe hereof reade *Psal. 7. 15.* and *9. 15.* *Esay 33. 11.* *Prover. 26. 27.* *Psal. 37. 14. 15.*

Reason I.

It is the fittest punishment, and most answerable to their sinne. The Lord doth require Magistrates to execute iustice after that manner, vpon him, that in rankour is found practising against his neighbour; *Yee shall doe vnto him (saith the Law) as hee hath thought to doe vnto his brother, thine eie shall haue no compassion, but life for life, eie for eie, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foote for foote:* much more then will he himselfe so proceede, which so fully and cleerely beholdeth all intents and purposes, and can so easily bring their wayes vpon their owne heads.

2.

Secondly, Gods glory shineth bright in these kindes of iudgements, & his hand is visibly apprehended on all sides: his seruants seeing it with reioycing, and his enemies feeling it with sorrow, and are made many times to acknowledge it, as wee reade that *Adonibezek* did, *Iudges 1. 7.*

Use I.

Thirdly, the earnest prayers of the Church importune the Lord continually euery houre and moment to repress the rage of their enemies, to breake their weapons, or to reuerberate and beate backe their strokes vpon themselves: and is God deafe, or wil he not heare the cries of his people? Or doth he heare them without compassion? Or can hee be compassionate towards them without reuenge to their persecuters?

Terror, for all them, that be spitefull, guilefull, and harmful: they deale more cruelly with themselves, than against any



any others, or than all their foes could otherwise doe against them.

The tyrant himselfe is euermore the principall subiect of his owne tyranny, and so is the crafty person of his subtilty. Wherein appeareth their simplicity and folly, who are no wiser than birds and beasts: yea farre they are more brutish and blockish than any of them: for whereas these vnreasonable creatures consider not the snares which Fowlers and Hunters spread for them; they see not the ginnes and ginnes which their owne hands haue twisted and layd to catch themselves withall.

But doe they not preuaile and proceede in doing harme against their brethren, and yet continue safe, and are free from troubles? Who seeth not that many oppressors liue and grow great, and obtaine their desires & prosper in all things? How say yee then that they make themselves a prey, and be sheaders of their owne blood?

Their present tranquillity doth no more prooue them to be in safety, than the liuing of the bird in the net doth argue that it is not dangerous to be caught. Though the net kill not, yet few that are taken with it escape death long, but are still in perill of it, and so (yea more certainly,) are all that intangle themselves with iniquity. The delay of their misery and ruine is no diminution of it, but an addition to the grieuousnesse of their destruction, who knoweth but that many calamities may yet befall them, before their death? Who knoweth but that their death may be lamentable and horrible? Who doth not know, that if they repent not, their torments after death will be intollerable, and endlesse? And therefore saith the Prophet; *Fret not thy selfe for him that prospereth in his way: nor for the man that bringeth his enterprises to passe: for euill doers shall be cut off. Yet a little and the wicked shall not be: thou shalt looke after his place, and he shall not be found, Psal. 37. 7. 9. 10.*

Instruction for them that are wronged to be patient, and not pursue their oppressours with exclamations and outcries; bewaile them rather in pittie, than storme against them

durst touch, hee got at first a deale of siluer, a wedge of golde, and a precious garment; but hee lost at last his Sonnes and his Daughters, and his Oxen, and his Asses, and his Sheepe and his Tent, and all that hee had, and his life together with them. Read Ezech. 7. 19. Iob 20. 15. Prover 21. 6. 7. Hab. 2. 4. 5. &c.

## Reason I.

James 5. 3. 4.

First, this vice of couetousnes and iniustice, is one of the crying sinnes, and goods ill gotten complaine to God of them that iniuriously vsurpe and detayne them. Goeto yee rich men, saith Saint Iames, your gold and siluer is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witnesse against you, and shall eate your flesh as it were fire: yee haue heaped up treasure for the last dayes. Behold, the hire of the labourers, that haue reaped your fields (which is of you kept backe by fraud) cryeth, and the cries of them that haue reaped are entred into the eares of the Lord of Hostes. How can God but hearken to this complaint, and seuerally punish the offenders, when so many informe against them with such instancy? The money cryeth, the person defrauded crieth, the cruelty crieth, and (to adde heereunto) the conscience of the wrong doer cryeth. Will not all those cries at the length procure the person cried out vpon to be cursed?

## 2.

Matth. 13. 22.

1 Tim. 6. 9. 10.

Secondly, auaricious persons expose their soules and liues to manifold perills, for the corrupting of their consciences, and the shortning of their dayes. They breed and nourish in their hearts such cares of this world, and loue of deceitfull riches, as like thornes doe choake the word of God in them: they cast themselues into temptations, and snares, and into many foolish noysome lusts, which drowne men into perdition and destruction.

They erre from the faith, and pierce themselues through with many sorrowes, in getting, keeping, and feare of losing. Some excruciate themselues with hunger, and fretting: some weare out themselues with excelsse of trauell: and some doe starue themselues with want of necessities: beside diuers other deadly mischiefs, tending to the bane of bodie and conscience: For vse, See Chap. 10. verse 2.

Verse 20. *Wisedome cryeth without, shee putteth forth her voyce in the streetes.*

Verse 21. *Shee calleth on the toppe of the assemblies, she uttereth her voyce at the entring of the gates, shee speaketh her words in cities, saying:*

**B**Efore was shewed the counsell which the Holy Ghost giueth to preuent sinne, and to detayne men from the practise of it: and heere is offered a direction to them that haue sinned (as all men haue in euery place) that they may be reclaymed from it. And this is set forth, first by the Author; secondly, by the manner; thirdly, by the matter.

The Author is *Wisedome*, or *Wisedomes*: the most high & excellent wisedome, *Iesus Christ*, the eternall wisedome of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisedome & knowledge. *Col. 2.3.* Who taketh vpon him heere, and in certaine other chapters of this Booke, the person of a Matron, Lady, or Princesse, according to the feminine gender, whereof the word that signifieth wisedome is in Hebrew. The manner of giuing his aduise and direction appeareth in many words, as *she calleth*, vseth earnestnes without abroad, and openly, *shee putteth forth her voyce in the streetes*, shee speaketh freely and plainly, and distinctly, in places most frequented: *she calleth on the top of the assemblies*, as it were out of an high place, as they vsed to doe which vsed to make Orations or Speeches to a great auditory or multitude: *she uttereth her voyce at the entring of the gates*, whither people were wont to repaire for matters of iustice and iudgement. *Gen. 34.20. Ruth 4.1.* And *uttereth her voyce in the city*, speaketh audibly and sensibly, in euery place and quarter of the City. All tenderth to this, that shee seeketh opportunity euery where, to doe good in euery place, in fields, townes, iudgement-places, market-places, publikely and priuately, and by all indeuours. The matter is contained in the two next verses.

*Wisedome, &c.]* The perfection of Gods wisedome is vsed in the publishing of his word, and the ministry thereof. See Chap. 9. verse 1.

*Doct. 1.*



them with indignation. Consider that they are in the state of mad men and bedlems : they furiously strike at thee, and miserably wound themselves : in seeking to breake thy head, they incurably cut their owne throates . Thou needest not therefore requite them with reuengefull actions, or clamorous inuectiues ; their owne hands and their owne tongues be fierce enough against them , hauing neither mercy nor moderation in them.

Verse 19. *Such are the wayes of euery one that is giuen to gaine, it will take away the life of the possessers.*

**N**OW are we come to the conclusion of this point, wherein all that hath beene spoken thereto is knit vp sententiouly with a rhetoricall acclamation and applied to more than robbers & purse-takers, or grosse murtherers : for saith he, *such are the wayes of euery one that is giuen to gaine* : So standeth the case both for practise of cruelty, if occasion be offered, and perill of selfe-hurting, with all that are too greedy of getting commodity. It is the gaine or commodity that is desired with a couetous mind, or compassed, with an vnrighteous hand, *it will take away the life of the possessers of it* : bring destruction at last of soule or body, vpon them that so vnrighteously hunt after it.

Doct. I.

So farre as men be couetous, they be also cruell. Such are their wayes (saith the Text) like theirs, whose feete make haste to shed bloud, and like theirs, who spread nets for their brethren though they be often discovered and defeated.

1. King. 21.

*Naboths Vineyard* was much more desired of *Achab* and *Iezabell*, than his life, though hee was his faithfull subiect, and nearest neighbour. And *Balaam* would haue cursed to death a whole nation, & that the best nation in all the world, the Church and people of God for wages and promotion. And from this roote sprang the calumniation of *Demetrius* against *Paul*. And the treachery of *Zibah* against *Mephibosheth*, and the treason of *Indas* against *Christ*.

Numb. 23.

Actes 19.

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First,

First, it proceedeth from selfe-loue, which alwayes careth for one, not onely with the neglect, but also with the detriment, and often with the desolation, destruction, and damnation of many, as the Prophets vse to cry out vpon vnmercifull Magistrates and vnconscionable Ministers, *Ezech. 22. 12. 13. 25. 27. Esay 56. 9. 10. 11. Zephani. 3. 3. 4. Zach. 11. 5.*

It hardneth their heart, and maketh them bold and secure, opposing their wealth as a bulwarke or fortresse against all manner of perills: *For the wicked maketh boast of his owne hearts desire, and the couetous blesseth himselfe: hee contemnaeth the Lord: His wayes alwayes prosper: Thy iudgements (saith the Psalmist to God) are aboue his sight, therefore desieth hee all his enemies.*

Instruction, not to trust any that is in the power of couetousnes: for no vnmercifull man is like to be faithfull, and none giuen to auarice can possibly be mercifull. If lucre command, they must obey, wholocuer shall be damnified by it: if niggardlines prohibite, they must desist, though it be from helping their nearest friends. No bands of amity, of nature, or duty will holde, if ought can be gained by the breach of them. Parents would be rid of their children to lessen their charge: and children would be glad their parents were dead, to possesse their patrimony. The husband wisheth his wife faire buried, that hee might marry an other with a greater portion: and the wife longeth after her husbands funerall, that shee might inioy her ioynture, and be better preferred.

*It will take away &c.* ] The more worldlings doe thriue in their commodities, the worse their state is.

*Ahab* had an immoderate appetite to the vineyard, which came as a dainty morsell into his mouth, but stuck as a bone in his throat, and choaked him: it was the vtter vndoing of him and his family. And *Indas* had no better a bargaine of his thirty pence, for which hee so perfidiously betrayed his innocent Master. Neyther did *Achan* himselfe any good, by laying sacrilegious hands vpon that which none other

them with indignation. Consider that they are in the state of mad men and bedlems : they furiously strike at thee, and miserably wound themselves : in seeking to breake thy head, they incurably cut their owne throates . Thou needest not therefore requite them with reuengefull actions, or clamorous inuectiues ; their owne hands and their owne tongues be fierce enough against them , hauing neither mercy nor moderation in them.

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Verse 20. *Wisedome cryeth without, shee putteth forth her voyce in the streetes.*

Verse 21. *Shee calleth on the toppe of the assemblies, she uttereth her voyce at the entring of the gates, shee speaketh her words in cities saying:*

**B**Efore was shewed the counsell which the Holy Ghost giueth to preuent sinne, and to detayne men from the practise of it: and heere is offered a direction to them that haue sinned (as all men haue in euery place) that they may be reclaymed from it. And this is set forth, first by the Author; secondly, by the manner; thirdly, by the matter.

The Author is *Wisedome*, or *Wisedomes*: the most high & excellent wisedome, *Iesus Christ*, the eternall wisedome of God, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisedome & knowledge, *Col. 2. 3*. Who taketh vpon him heere, and in certaine other chapters of this Booke, the person of a Matron, Lady, or Princesse, according to the feminine gender, whereof the word that signifieth wisedome is in Hebrew. The manner of giuing his aduise and direction appeareth in many words, as *she calleth*, vseth earnestnes, without abroad and openly, *shee putteth forth her voyce in the streetes*, shee speaketh freely and plainly, and distinctly, in places most frequented: *she calleth on the top of the assemblies*, as it were out of an high place, as they vsed to doe which vsed to make Orations or Speeches to a great auditory or multitude: *she uttereth her voyce at the entring of the gates*, whither people were wont to repaire for matters of iustice and iudgement, *Gen. 34. 20. Ruth 4. 1. And uttereth her voyce in the city*, speaketh audibly and sensibly, in euery place and quarter of the City. All tendeth to this, that shee seeketh opportunity euery where, to doe good in euery place, in fields, townes, iudgement-places, market-places, publikely and priuately, and by all indeuours. The matter is contained in the two next verses.

*Wisedome, &c.*] The perfection of Gods wisedome is vsed in the publishing of his word, and the ministry thereof. See *Chap. 9. verse 1.*

*Decl. 1.*



Doct. 2.

By, &c.] The Lord useth to deale euidently, and seriously in his word, and ministry.

He doth not whisper in a corner, nor speake obscurely, as it were in a strange language, nor remissely say what his people ought to doe, but cryeth aloud vnto them, and earnestly calleth vpon them, to take notice of his will, and their owne duties for the due performance of the same.

Zachar. 7. 7.

Luke 3. 4.

Esay 40. 6.

1.

The strict charge giuen to his messengers, & the vniform diligence of his faithfull seruants, for the discharge thereof in seuerall ages, giueth vndoubted testimony to the truth of this doctrine. Zachary witnesseth what was inioyned and practised in ancient times, when he saith, *should yee not heare the word which the Lord hath cryed by the Ministry of the former Prophets? &c.* And it was the Title giuen to John the Baptist: according to the purpose of his Office, to *a voyce of one crying in the wildernesse.* And to the Apostles and all the Ministers of God their successors to the end of the world. A voyce said, *Cry, and telleth what to cry, &c.*

First, all Gods words are so full of verity, equity, wisdom, and weight, that they are much graced by the light, and open publication: the more they are heard, the more they will be iustified, the better they are knowne, the greater prayse they shall winne continually. Imposters, Witches, Southsayers, and Diuels, seeke corners, and delight in whispering, and obscuritie, but the Lord is glorified by the cleare manifestation of his assertions, precepts and promises, as he saith: *I haue not spoken in secret, neyther in a place of darknesse in the earth, I sayd not in vaine to the seede of Iacob. seeke yee me: I the Lord doe speake righteousness and declare righteous things.*

2.

Esay 40. 9.

Secondly, there is a deafenesse in all mens nature at counsels, together with a drowlines, they must be wakened and made to hearken with importunity and shrilnes of Arguments, though not alwayes with vehemency of speech. And therefore that the hearts of the godly might be refreshed, he saith to those whom he sendeth as comforters: *O thou that bringest good tidings to Zion, get thee vp into the high*  
*mountaines*

mountaine: O thou that bringest good tidings to Ierusalem! lift up thy voyce with strength, be not afraid: Say vnto the cities of Iudah, Behold your God. And that the consciences of the wicked might be conuincd, hee saith to those by whom hee directeth reproofes: Cry aloud, or cry with thy throat, spare not: lift up thy voyce like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and to the house of Iacob their sinnes.

Isay 58.1.

Thirdly, his compassion to his people in perill doth moue him to be instant with them, that taking knowledge of their estate, by his earnestnes, they may acknowledge their sinnes and repent for them; and sue for pardon, and haue it confirmed: and see the stratagems of Sathan, and be the more watchfull.

3.

Instruction for Ministers, who are the seruants and agents of Wisdome, to imitate her, & so to deale for her, as she propoeth an example vnto them: namely, to propound their doctrine in all clearenesse of doctrine and method, that the people may vnderstand, and their exhortation in all earnestnesse of speech of spirit, that the people may be moued by it. It was an honour to Iohn the Baptist, That hee was a burning and shining light: and a praise to Iohn the Apostle, with his brother Iames, That hee was the Sonne of Thunder, who are to be followed of euery one whom the Lord hath selected to the office of the Ministry; Reade Ier. 22. Ionah 1.2. 2 Tim. 4.2.

Ife. 1.

Iohn 5.5.

Marke 3. 17.

And heereby the people are to be put in minde of their wonted security and heedlesnesse, and to be excited also to greater attention: for whensoever God calleth, it becometh man to answere: but when he crieth aloud to vs, wee must know that the matter doth greatly concerne vs.

Reproofe of vn sufficient Ministers, which standing vp in the place of Wisdomes criers, or sitting downe in the seate of her teachers, or taking on them the office of her Ambassadors, cause the people to expect some ioyfull message from their mouthes; but they make a dumb shew, as wanting the tongues of the learned, & like Statues or Images, can say nothing. And after them are idle Ministers to be reprehended,

2.

are sent on Wisdomes errand, and haue receiued their message, but through slouthfulnes are slacke to deliuer it: shee commands them to erie, and they will scarce take paines to speake, and so are disobedient and vntrusty to God that sendeth them, and treacherous and pernicious to the soules vnto whom they are sent. And lastly, here are to be taxed those Ministers, which affect obscurity, and labour to get applause and praise of learning, by that course and phrase of speech as people least vnderstand, and therefore are little or nothing edified by it. *Paul* could approue his faithfulness by this, that he made the matter so plaine, that if the Gospell were hid, it was hid to them that were lost, whom the prince of darknes blindfolded.

2 Cor. 4. 3. 4.

Doct. 3.

*Without in the streets, &c.*] God hath appointed his gospel to be preached, and heard, as publickly as may be, for the benefit of many. See chap. 9. verse 3. Doctr. 3.

Doct. 4.

Gods Ministers, by whom Wisdome cryeth, ought to doe good to mens soules in all places.

The conuersion of sinners, & the edification of the faithfull is to be sought with all diligence and zeale: no time, no occasion, no place, nor opportunity which may further the same, is to be let slip. Such is the industry of Wisdome in this text, making her voyce to be heard without the city, and in the city; in the streets, & at the gates, and where concourse is. And so did *Christ* himselfe in the temple, synagogues, fields, mountains, houses, highways, vpon land, & on the waters, &c.

So also did the Apostles & Ministers of *Christ*, as may appeare, *Acts* 10. 24. and 16. 14. 15. 31. 32. and 20. 1. 2. 3. 20.

Reason 1.

First, loyalty to God, whose shepherds and ambassadors they are, requireth it at their hands: for it belongeth to a seruant, to be faithfull and diligent in his masters businesse, wheresoever occasion is offered.

2.

Secondly, loue to their brethren, hatred of sin, and desire of mens saluation, should incite and stir them vp thereunto.

3.

Thirdly, as they be prest, and ready to doe Gods worke every where, so will their wages and recompence be correspondent in greatnes vnto their good seruice.

Reproofe



Reprooffe of the negligence and vnconfcionablenesse of them, who thinke they are free to be mute, among whom-foeuer they conuerfe, or whatfoeuer is spoken or done in their presence, if they be out of the Pulpit. Many both Ministers and priuate persons, doe thinke that all places beside the Church, are priuiledged from the words of wisedome. And therefore it is held meete for her, cyther to be absent from, or silent at many meetings, as at feasts and places of recreation, where no word of Religion must be heard, for feare of marring all. And in dayes of reuelling, and running into all excesse of riot, men imagine that they haue a Charter of long custome, good enough to commit sinne without contolment.

Verse 22. *O yee simple ones, how long will yee loue simplicitie, and scorner in scorning, and fooles hating knowledge?*

**H**ere beginneth the matter of *Wisedomes* speech and direction: which consisteth of an Expostulation, in this Verse; and of an Exhortation in the next.

In the Expostulation note the

}	1 <i>Persons</i> with whom hee dealeth.
	2 <i>Faults</i> for which he blameth them.

Of *Persons* three sorts are reprehended: the first are the *simple*, such as are voyd of sound iudgement and vnderstanding; and therefore are ready and ealie to be peruered. As it is said in the foureteenth Chapter, vers. 15. *The simple beleeueth every thing.*

The second are *Scorners*, such as being set in euill, refuse, deride, and disdaine all meanes vsed to reclayme them.

The third are *Fooles*, who are poysoned with pestilent opinions, and corrupted with wicked courses of life and behauiour.

The *Faults* wherewith hee vpbraideth them, are the habites of euill in them, as of simplicitie in the Simple, of scorning in the Scorners, of foolishnesse in the Fooles; whereof hee

hee conuinceth them by two arguments: one that they are obstinate, and persist in them, which is intended in *how long?* The other, that their hearts and affections were possessed with them, in that they *loved* the same, and *delighted* therein, and *hated* to be cured of them.

Doct. 3.

A greater sinne in one is no excuse of a lesse in another.

Psal. 1. 1.

The simple passeth not vnreproued by reason of the foolish, nor yet the foolish because of the scorner. Though each of these in diuers degrees exceede others. The Psalmist pronounceth him a blessed man, as well that *standeth not in the way of sinners*, as that *siteth not in the seate of the scornfull*, and *which walketh not in the counsell of the wicked*, as *which standeth not in the way of sinners*.

1 Cor. 6. 9. 10.

Where S. Paul declareth the grieuous estate of great malefactors, as *Idolaters, Buggerrers, and Adulterers, &c.* he warranteth no safety to sinners lesse culpable, and whose offences are not so hainous, as to *Fornicators, Wantons, &c.* but threatneth them also with losse of saluation and of the Kingdome of God.

Reue. 22. 15.

And S. John fore-sheweth, that they which *make or loue lyes*, shall be excluded out of heauen and the company of Gods people, with *Dogs, Inchanters, Whoremongers, and Murtherers.*

Reason 1.

Gal. 5. 19.

First, the foulest abominations and the smaller faults issue both out of one fountaine, nay, puddle, or rather sincke, originall corruption and impurity of mans hart and nature. *The workes of the flesh are manifest* (saith S. Paul) *which are adultery, fornication, uncleannesse, wantonnesse, &c.*

2.

Secondly, Satan is serued, and Gods Law transgressed, not onely by the grossest vices, but likewise by those of an inferior nature: for he that saith, *thou shalt not kill*, doth also say, *thou shalt not be angry with thy brother vnadvisedly*: he that saith, *thou shalt not commit adultery*, doth also say, *thou shalt not looke vpon a woman to lust after her*: he that saith, *thou shalt not steale*, doth also say, *thou shalt not couet nor desire that which is thy neighbours.*

3.

Thirdly, the notorious transgressor, and the lesse noted trespasser,

trespasser, trauell both in one way, though the one before the other: and who knoweth how soone hee that commeth after, may ouer-take him that goeth before? And to the same end of the iourney they shall both come (if neyther of them repent) namely, to perdition, and hell-fire, wherewith they shall be both tormented, though vnequally, and not the one so much as the other, because his offences haue not beene so many, or so fearefull.

Reproofe of them that imbolden themselves in pettie and light offences (as they repute them, notwithstanding they shall feele them great and weighty, when their soules shall be pressed with the heauy burthens of them) because they are not culpable and guiltie of such outrageous villanies as some others. They allow themselves to take the name of God in vaine, because they blaspheme it not, nor periure: they may vse dalliance and wanton trickes and exercises, because they professe not whoredome, as some are knowne to doe: they are not afraid to be earthly, & worldly, and sold to couetousnesse, because they are not oppressors and spoylers, as many are found to be. This is to iustifie ones selfe by comparifon, that others blacknesse should make him white, and others euils should make him good, which the Scripture alloweth not for a matter of comfort, but *admonisheth every man to proue his owne workes, that hee may haue reioycing in himselfe onely, and not in another: for every man shall beare his owne burthen.* Otherwise, what a folly were it for Fellons, Cut-purses and Burglers to yeeld themselves conuicted, and to suffer the sentence of death, whiles there are any Traytors or murderers, or any that haue committed more or greater robberies, at the Barre? Otherwise also, many reprobates mouthes would not be stopped, but opened at the day of the Lord. Those that haue done least hurt might cleare themselves by them that haue done most, vntill it come to Caine, or Indas, or the Pharises, which haue sinned against the holy Ghost, or desperate Apostates: and at last, the Diuell should be damned for all, because that neuer any man hath done halfe so much mischief as hee.

We.

Gal. 6. 4-5

How



Doct. 2.

*How long, &c.]* The longer any man continueth in his sinne without repentance, the more the fault increaseth. If a man could keepe himselfe cleare from it, hee should best preferue his comfort and happinelle: but for as much as that cannot possibly be attayned vnto, hee is the wisest that soonest departeth from it, and breaketh familiaritie and friendship with it.

Heb. 3. 9. 10. 11.

The shame of their stubbornnesse cleaueth fast to the memoriall for euer, against whom the Lord both testified and protested, saying; *Your Fathers tempted mee, proued mee, and saw my workes forty yeeres long. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said; They erre euer in their heart, neyther haue they knowne my wayes. Therefore I sware in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest.*

Luke 13. 7.

If it were not safe for the Tree mentioned in the Gospell, to grow three yeeres fruitlesse, after the time that fruit was expected of it, much more dangerous is it for vs to be barren of goodnesse, and fertile in euill, for many yeeres together, hauing had such excellent meanes and opportunities to make vs fructific: Read *Isay 65. 2. Gen. 6. 3. Amos 7. 8. Ier. 44. 10.*

Reason 1.

Rom. 2. 4.

First, whosoever maketh delay of turning to God and leauing of sinne, despiseth and abuseth the patience and long sufferance of God, as the Apostle witnesseth. And therefore incenseth his displeasure, and so augmenteth his owne misery.

2.

Secondly, the number, quantitie, and odiousnes of sinnes are increased by the continuance thereof: euery day are new added to the old, and euery moment both old and new waxe riper, and cry for the Sickle of vengeance.

3.

Thirdly, in the meane time they harden the hearts of men, with custome and continuance, making them sencelesse, and expelling godly sorrow, shame, feare, and all manner of remorse; so at the last, they come to be audacious and impudent in the profession of ill-doing, and vitterly vnable to amend.

Jer. 13. 23.

*Can the black-More change his skinne (saith Ieremy) or the Leopard*

*Leopard his spots? then may yee also doe good, that are accustomed to doe euill.*

Fourthly, to them that fall not into these extremities, yet the conscience is surely laden and pressed with manifold burthens, and it is very difficult to cast out those enemies to whom they haue graunted so long a time to fortifie themselves; or to remoue those plants which are so deeply rooted within them: for that which two fingers can plucke vp at once when it first springeth, the strength of the arme, with an Axe, can hardly hew it downe at many strokes, after it is come to the full growth.

Instruction to breake off league and amity with euery sinne without any delay, before the next yeere, before the next weeke, before the next day, before the next houre: for then wee cast off the yoke of it, when wee cast out the loue of it, and the sooner wee doe it, the easier and safer wee shall finde it. Euery moment that thou liuest in impenitencie, thou lyest in perill, and damnation, and confusion. Albeie thou take thy pleasure now, yet thou maist be in paine, and endlesse torments anone: for it may well stand with Gods Iustice to inflict them, and it is not in thy power to resist them.

*When they shall say peace, peace, and safetie, then shall come vpon them sodaine destruction, as the trauaile vpon a woman with childe, and they shall not escape.* The Lord is not bound to tarry mens leasure, nor stay for their conuersion: but iustly may, and often doth preuent it by death, or the terrible stroke of obduration and hardnes of heart, or other iudgements, especially when they put it off, and presume to giue themselves a day for repentance, and that a long one, vntill old age, and the end of their life. And who shall compell him to fore-tell the time of any miseries, which hee intendeth to plague secure persons with, in this life, (as with sickenesse, deafnesse, lamenesse, blindnesse, madnesse, desperation, besides losse of lands or substance, beggary, contempt, plagues vpon yoke-fellowes, children, friends and familie, and a thousand others) which men neuer thought on, that they might shift for themselves to auoid them? And is

Vse 1.

Thief. 5. 3.

it not wisdom then, with all celeritie to make speede, and runne to the Lord by humiliation and amendment? If death and iudgement may finde mee out before the next night, doth it not concerne mee to finde God and his fauour before the next noone; yea, in this present moment and instant? The holy Ghost perswadeth him that is intangled with rash Suretiship, and fallen into his neighbours hands, to rid himselfe out with as much speed as the Doe runneth from the Hunter, or the Bird flyeth from the Fowler; and not so much as once to sleepe or take rest in such perill, how much more oughtest thou that art insnared with deadly sinne, more dangerous than debt, who through rebellion hast cast thy selfe into Gods hand, to be punished, how much more (I say) oughtest thou to make all hast to repent, and get thy pardon, that thy soule may be safe from perdition?

2.

Reproofe of those that maintaine their corrupt courses, both of Superstition and dissolute licentiousnesse, and take libertie to liue and proceede therein by prescription: They euer since their childe-hood, and their ancestors beyond mans memory, haue exercised the same, and therefore it seemeth vnreasonable that they should now be debarred of them. A whole Sermon of *Ieremies* was so confuted, if a contempt and reiection may goe currant for a confutation. For in plaine tearmes they refuse to obey, saying; *The word that thou hast spoken to vs in the name of the Lord, we will not heare it of thee, but wee will doe whatsoener thing goeth out of our owne mouthes, as to burne Incense to the things of heauen, and to poure out drinke Offerings vnto them, as wee haue done, both we, and our Fathers, our Kings, and our Princes, &c.*

*Ierem. 44. 16.*

17.

This reason is of no force in facts disallowed by the positive Lawes of Kingdomes and Nations: must Iudges iustifie all things to be lawfull that are vsuall? Is it a good plea to cleare ones selfe of the crime of robbery, to say that hee is an auncient Robber? And that therefore no penaltie is due to him for murther, because he was a murtherer from his youth, and since that time hath murthered many? Conuicted offenders are wont to plead for themselves after a contrary



contrary manner : *I beseech you to be good unto mee, it is my first offence.*

*Loue simplicitie, delight in scorning, &c.] Sinne is most dangerous, when it is most loued and delighted in.*

Doctr. 3.

The best men, such as *Paul* was, cannot but commit it, but yet they hate it : it is as a yoke on their neckes, and a burthen on their backes, and not as a chaine or sumptuous garment, but the wicked, whom it most cruelly woundeth and killeth, are most affected therewith, preferring it before all things, and like of nothing without it. It is a sugred poyson that worketh deadly, when it tasteth deliciously : and bringeth vpon them the greatest plagues who hath given it entertainment with greatest pleasure, *When wickednesse was sweet in his mouth (saith Zophar) and he hid it vnder his tongue, and fauoured it, and would not forsake it, but kept it close in his mouth, then the meate in his bowels was turned, the gall of Aspes was in the midst of him.* Reade *Iohn 3. 19. Ephes. 4. 19. Ezech. 33. 31. Psal. 73. 6. 1 Iohn 2. 15. 16. Iames 4. 4.*

First, so much as wickednesse is loued, the Lord and his Law is hated, as may partly appeare by the end of this sentence, and more fully by those places quoted out of *S. Iames* and *S. Iohn*.

Reason. 1.

Secondly, where Loue is depraued and set on euill objects, all the rest of the affections, Feare, Hope, Ioy, &c. must needes be corrupted with it, yea, the whole soule is out of order, and therefore also the actions and wayes will be all peruerterd.

2.

Thirdly, they whose hearts are set on sinne, are hardly re- claymed from it, for Loue is a strong band, whether it tye the minde to good or euill : friends will not easily be per- swaded to part company. See *Vers. 16. and Chap. 10. 23.*

3.

*Foolles, &c.] They are greater foolles that despise spirituall vnderstanding, than which are destitute of naturall capacitie. See Vers. 7. and Chap. 12. Vers. 1. Doctr. 2.*

Doctr. 4.

Verse.

Verse 23. *Turne you at my correction, behold I will poure out my spirit vnto you; and make you vnderstand my words.*

**V**I S D O M E hauing searched into their sore, and hauing discovered the same vnto them, doth now apply a plaister which may heale it: and after a sharpe rebuke for their former folly and contempr, hee prescribeth a remedie for the time to come, by faithfull counsell, with an Exhortation.

Wherein may be obserued: { 1 The *Dutie* that is to be performed.  
2 The *Motines* that should induce them to it.

The *Dutie* to be performed is repentance and reformation, which hee calleth *turning*, by a similitude taken eyther from Trauellers, that haue gone the wrong way, and must come backe againe, or from Seruants, or Children, or Souldiers, which haue runne away from their Gouvernours, and vndone themselves.

The *Motines* are two: the former is from that sharpnesse which the Lord had vsed toward them, eyther by rebukes or chastisements: and the latter, from that kindnesse which he would shew vnto them; the promise whereof is noted with the word of obseruation, *Behold*, as intending a thing admirable and worthy to be looked vpon of all: and so indeede are the things promised, the effects of his kindnesse, as namely, hee would bestow his *Spirit* vpon them, the gifts and graces of the holy Ghost, and that not sparingly, and in a small quantitie, but plentifully and in great abundance, as rich fountaines cause their waters to boyle out: for so doth the word signifie: and more particularly; hee promisethto illuminate their minde, with the sauing knowledge of his holy will, which is the worke and fruit of the spirit that shall be poured vpon them.

*Doct. 2.*

The best counsell that can be giuen, is to perswade a man to repent of his sinne, and to leaue it.

Christ

Christ commeth heere in his goodnes, to exhort men to that which will doe them most good: he taketh vpon him the person of Wisedome, to informe how they may deale most wisely, and what is that, but to turne themselves from their wayes which were wicked.

John beganne his ministry; Repent: for the kingdome of God is at hand. And in the same manner did the Lord Iesus giue the onset on his. Peter being intreated to giue direction what men frightened, and pricked in their consciences, were best to doe, admonisheth them to amend their liues. And Paul reckoneth repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Iesus Christ to be the summe of all that he taught either Iewes or Gentiles euery where. Reade Esay 1. 16. Jerem. 4. 1. Ezech. 18. 30. Hosea 14. 2. Joel 2. 12. 13.

First, it procureth reconciliation with God, who is at variance with all that are impenitent. Reason 1.

Secondly, it deliuereth men out of the snares of the Diuell, which till then, are taken of him at his will, 2 Tim. 2. 26. 2.

Thirdly, it maketh men ready for their latter end, and their appearance before the iudgement seate of Iesus Christ, whereas before they liue vnder the burden of a guilty conscience, and in danger of death and damnation. 3.

Fourthly, it preuenteth manifold plagues, and curses in this life, and either remoueth or altereth the nature of those which had formerly seized vpon men. 4.

Fifthly, it maketh way for, bringeth and seasoneth all good prosperity, and causeth men to runne their race with joy and comfort, both with the peace of a good conscience, and the fruition of all earthly blessings which are expedient for them. 5.

Instruction, to hearken to the Lord Iesus Christ so graciously aduising vs, and to vse all holy means, whereby our soules may be purified, and our liues reformed, and so to conuert in due manner: as to search and try our wayes and turne vnto him, Lamen. 3. 40. To confesse our sinnes and purge them, Pro. 28. 13. To humble our hearts with godly sorrow



James 3. 10.

forrow and affliction, James 4. 9. and acknowledge their friendship which haue deliuered. Wisdomes message vnto vs : for none can be so beneficiall, and gratifie vs so much as they which haue communicated vnto vs the counsells of God, and directed vs in the way of saluation ; *Hee that hath conuerted a sinner from going astray, doth save a soule from death, and hideth a multitude of sinnes.*

2.

Reproofe and terrour for them that diuert from some of their lewd courses, but turne not to the right way : which may be said to alter their sinnes, rather than to leaue off sinning ; which change superstition into profanenesse and wastefulnesse into couetousnesse and oppression, &c. These go forward still in the same iourney, though they goe in another path. And what shall wee say of them that turne backe from good, or runne faster in euill ? which haue reuolted from that piety which they made profession and shew of, or are more outragious in wickednes and rebellion against God, than euer they were wont to be ? If there be Wisdom in Wisdomes counsell, there is nothing but folly and madness in these mens practises.

3.

Incouragement for them that obey this holy exhortation, that depart from iniquities, as they are admonished, that returne to God, as to him they are called, though they be iested at, and euill spoken of, and censured for silly creatures and ideots, yet let them consider that they can not be reproached, but that Gods will, which they obeyed, must also be contemned : if they deale absurdly, the counsell of God teacheth absurdities : if their behaviour in this respect be ridiculous, it is a ridiculous thing to come to God, and be made happy and blessed for euer.

Doctr. 2.

*At my correction, &c.* ] Reproofes and afflictions are sent of God to helpe mentoward saluation, and make them better.

The end why hee checketh and chasteneth vs, is not to driue vs from him, but to draw vs to him ; as parents nurture their children to make them obedient, and durifull, and not rebels and runne-agates : and Husbandmen till their ground

ground, that it may be fertile, and bring forth corne, and  
not weedes and thistles. Therefore hee called them fooles,  
and scorner, not in bitterness with purpose to reuile them, so  
much as in loue, to admonish them of their foolishnes, and  
morning, that they might know the wickednesse of their  
wayes, and the perill of their estate, and so hearken to coun-  
sell, and be reformed. Heereunto tend many Sentences and  
sayings in the Scriptures, among which this is one: *As mi-*  
*as I loue, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and a-*  
*mond.* And this is another: *Hee that regardeth instruction, is*  
*in the way of life: but, hee that refuseth correction goeth out of*  
*the way:* *Reade Psal.94.12. Esay 30.20.21. Iere.31.18.19.*  
*Hebr.12.10.*

*Reuel.3.19.*

*Prover.10.17.*

First, his rebukes and threatnings are seldome without  
precepts and promises annexed vnto them, according as  
appeareth heere, and in *Esay: A sinfull Nation, a People la-*  
*den with iniquity: Princes of Sodom, People of Gomorrah:*  
*When you stretch your hand I will hide mine eyes from you. Wash*  
*you, make you cleane: take away the euill of your workes before*  
*me, cease to doe euill, learne to doe well: though your sinnes*  
*were crimson, they shall be made white as wool,* *Esa.1.4.10.15.*  
*27.18. &c.*

*Reason I.*

Secondly, the Lord exempteth not, or rather (to speake  
properly) debarreth not his owne sonnes and daughters,  
and dearest children from reproofes and corrections, which  
they should neuer taste of, were they testimonies of his ha-  
red, and not pledges of his loue, for the good of their  
soules.

2.

Thirdly, his purpose in rebuking and chastening of his,  
is reuealed by the good effects of his rebukes and chastise-  
ments. For they waken them from security, and stirre them  
up to an holy feare of the Lord: they purge away much  
guile, and helpe to worke humilitie; they serue to cure the  
stafenes of their eares, and the blindnes of their eyes, that  
they may heare better when God speaketh, and see more  
when he worketh.

3.

*God speaketh once or twice (saith Elihu) and one seeth it not,*

*L. 2*

*then*

then hee openeth the eares of men, euen by his corrections, which hee sealeth, that hee might cause man to turne away from his enterprise, and that hee might hide the pride of man: Many prayers are procured by them, in the examination of mens hearts and waies: many faults are confessed which else would be hidden, and many liues are reformed, which otherwise would remaine vngodly, vnrighteous, and euery way wicked.

*Vse 1.*

Instruction, to satisfie the Lord, in that which he intendeth, and receiue that benefit which hee thereby offereth. Doth he therefore chide, and strike vs, that we should runne vnto him? What meane wee to runne further from him? Why doe wee not accept of his helpe, to come backe with sorrow, and shame, and feare, and humiliation, for those sinnes which wee haue committed with delight and pleasure?

Though his word, which should haue beene enough to reclaime vs, hath not sufficiently preuailed with vs, yet his word and stripes ioyned together be no longer repelled, but haue their effectuall working. Let not a reproofe, a losse, a sickenes, an ach, the death or hurt of a friend, a crosse in family, or any thing that is grieuous and bitter vnto vs, continue with vs, or passe away from vs without some profit. And for this purpose two extremities are heedelessly to be avoided, that wee neyther contemne Gods voyce or hand, in slight matters, and not to be cared for: neither yet to thinke them so heauy and importable, as to be discouraged at them. They are not imposed on vs to that end that wee should either stubbornly stand against them without submission, or heartlesly sinke downe vnder them, without hope and comfort. And therefore himselfe giueth this admonition, and encouragement: *Ady sonne, despise not the chastening of the Lord, neyther faint when thou art rebuked of him: For when the Lord loueth, hee chasteneth, and hee scourgeth euery sonne that he receiueth.*

*Doctr. 3.*

*Behold, I will poure out, &c.]* All the maladies of Gods Elect, are healed by his sanctifying Spirit.

Herewith he promisseth to assist the simple, to make them iudicious



delicious, and the scorner to make them more modest :  
and the foolish, to teach them wisdom : all are to desist  
from the love of their vices, and every one to returne to the  
right way, and home to his owne maister, by the helpe and  
vertue of the Spirit. The Prophets vse to promise this as  
an effectuell remedy against all sorts of calamities, as well  
publike as private, both externall and internall. That did  
Isay in this manner : *The palace shall be forsaken, and the  
house of the City shall be left : the towers and fortresse shall be  
ruines for ever ; the delight of wilde Asses, and a pasture for  
sheepes, untill the Spirit be powred upon vs from above, and  
the wilderness (that is a man barren of grace) become a fruit-  
full field ; that is, a Christian plentiful in goodnesse. And  
the same did Ezechiel in these wordes : A new heart will I*

Isay 33.14.25.

Ezec. 36.28.29.

give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and I will take  
away the stony heart out of your body, and I will give you an heart  
of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to  
walke in my Statutes, &c. And ye shall dwell in the land that I  
gave to your Fathers, and yee shall be my people, and I will be your  
God, &c.

Reason I.

First, without it no man knoweth the will of God, as ap-  
peareth by Wisdomes speech in this place; *I will make you  
understand my words.* A vaile is spread ouer euery mans  
minde, which cannot be remooued by any man, or any  
meanes, but onely by the Holy Ghost.

Secondly, without it no man can imbrace the graces  
which are offered; nor performe the seruices which are com-  
manded : nor doe such duties as are required. The Spirit  
worketh faith and giueth power to beleue : the Spirit wor-  
keth softnes of heart, and giueth power to repent : the Spi-  
rit worketh holy desires, and giueth power to pray : the Spi-  
rit worketh obedience, and giueth power to keepe Gods  
commandements : the Spirit worketh vprightnes, and gi-  
ueth power to deale sincerely : Euery vertue and all good-  
nesse is the fruit of the Spirit : whosoever hath it is a free  
man; and whosoever is destitute of it, is in bondage : and  
therefore can doe no more for his owne soule than his two

2.

2 Cor. 3. 17.

Psal. 51. 12.

Use 1.

Esay 42. 1.

masters, Sinne and Satan, will permit him. Now *the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*: Which moued the Prophet to pray so earnestly, that God would *establishe him with his free Spirit*.

Consolation to them vpon whom this celestially and diuine gift is bestowed: it is an infallible euidence of Gods kindnesse and fauour, such as hee sheweth to none but his owne: for by the same they are begotten and made his owne. He that erst without it was his enemy, is now by possessing of it become his childe: and the better he loueth any of his children, the more abundance of his grace hee giueth vnto them: and therefore, because *Iesus Christ* is absolutely, and infinitely, the best and dearest of all his sonnes, hee hath most abundantly replenished him, with the fulnesse of his Spirit: for testification of his loue, *Behold, saith he, my Seruant, I will stay vpon him: mine Elect in whom my soule delighteth, I haue put my Spirit vpon him*. Gorgeous apparrell, delicate fare, sumptuous houses, costly furniture, beauty, strength, parentage and the like, must all stand backe, and giue place to the Spirit, and what is wealth vnto it, although thy treasures were equall with *Salomons*? Or, what were preferment and dignity, if thou couldest arise to the height of *Salomons* glory? Oh then vse it well, and cherish it: make it thy guide to be directed by it: let it command, and be in subiection to it. Griue it not with lusts, pride, hypocrisie, enuy, bitterness, lewd speeches, negligence in the seruices of God, or any manner of profanenesse. If thou wouldest haue it dwell cheerefully in thee, and thy heart be made cheerefull by it; imploy it continually, and vse the helpe thereof at all times, in fighting against thy corruptions: in working godly grieue, in making thy prayers for thee: in framing thy cares to attention: in applying the word to thy heart: in stirring thee vp to obedience: that hateth idleness, and is made sad when men will not take profit by it, and is best pleased, when it hath most businesse.

2.

Terrour for them that are wholly carnall, and altogether fleshly, of what estate or nature, or complexion soeuer they are

re of, or what wit, or learning, or other indowments soeuer they haue? None of all these can heale the hurts of their soules, nor cure the wounds which sinne hath made in their consciences.

The precepts of God preuaile not to teach, nor his promises to allure, nor his threatnings to terrifie, nor his corrections to humble, or alter the hearts of those which are voyd of the Spirit. Euill trees they are, their roote is without all good sappe, and how then being not grafted, should they bring forth any fruit, but that which is euill? Saint Iude complayning of many enormous crimes of wicked men, *that walked after their owne vngodly lusts*, assigneth this as the cause thereof, *That they were fleshy, not hauing the spirit*. So then, till that be giuen vnto them, they are in the snarcs of the diuell, in the power of sinne, vnder the curse of God, and subiect to damnation. Yet is not their case so desperate as that it should be deemed remediless, because the mercy of God is not confined in such sort, as not to haue liberty to be extended to them: nor his hand shortned, with inability of giuing grace: they be not cut off from the hope and possibility of his inestimable blessing, though they are deprived of the present possession thereof. *Wolues may be made companions of Lambs, and Leopards lie with Kiddees, and Lyons with Calues, venomous Aspes, and Cockatrices may grow to be so meeke and harmelesse, that sucking children may play vpon their holes without perill.*

*Iude 7. 18. 19.*

*Esay 11. 6. 7. 8.*

Verse 24. *Forasmuch as I call, but ye refuse, I stretch out my hand, but none regardeth:*

Verse 25. *But yee despise all my counsell, and will none of my correction.*

**H**itherto Wisedome hath perswaded wicked men to repentance by expostulations, exhortations, and promises. Now she declareth the miserable estate of wilfull persons with comminations and threatnings.

The iudgement that shee denounceth against them, is no lesse than destruction it selfe; which is shewed, partly by the



cause of it, in these two verses; and partly; by the grievousnes of it, in the three next.

The cause is obstinacie and perversenesse, whereof shee convinceth them, partly by her benignity, and kinde dealing towards them, and partly by their ingratitude, and contemptuous behaviour towards her. *Shee calleth them* by way of inuitement, to be partakers of her graces: *shee stretcheth out her hands vnto them*, expressing her earnest desire of their conuersion, as men by beckoning or other signes importune those whom they would haue to come vnto them; *but they refused to hearken*, and to yeeld obedience to her voyce: *none of them regarded the testimonies and tokens of her fauour: they despised, set at naught, and derided her counsell*, those wholefome precepts, and admonitions which she gaue vnto them, and would none of her corrections, were weary of her rebukes and chastisements, but not amended by them.

*Dott. 1.*

The more meanes any one hath to make him good, the greater is his sinne and danger if he make not vse of them.

For this cause our Saviour Christ aggravateth the sinne of *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, beyond that of *Tyrus* and *Sidon*, and deemeth the damnation of the *Capernaits* to be more horrible and fearefull then that of the *Sodomites*. And this moued him to testifie against the froward *Pharises*, and hard hearted *Iewes*, to whom hee had preached, *that if hee had not come and spoken vnto them, they should haue had no sinne*, in comparison, *but now their sinne remaineth*. Read *Isay 5. 1. 2. &c. and 65. 2. Hos. 12. 10. 2 Kings 11. 13. 14. 2 Chron. 36. 15. 16. Heb. 2. 2. 3. 4. and 12. 25. Luke 13. 34. Heb. 6. 7. 8.*

*Reason 1.*

First, the goodnesse of God is despised, his gifts are disvalued, and his fauour reiected, by the refusall of his gracious offers, and disobedience to his holy instructions.

2.

Secondly, the conscience is more pressed with the weight of guiltinesse, when men doe wittingly and willingly proceed in their euill wayes against the knowledge of the truth, and the manifestation of Gods holy will so evidently demonstrated vnto them: and therefore by his righteous iudgement,

ment, their eyes grow blinder; and their hearts harder, vntill they be wholly giuen ouer to a reprobate sence.

Thirdly, all the meanes which haue beene offered, and repulged, turne to be testimonies against them. Every lesson which they haue heard, every example which they haue seene, every crosse which they haue felt, every blessing which they haue receiued, doe cry for punishment vpon them at one time or another in this life, and will giue euidence against them, in the audience of all the world, before the Iudgement-seate of Iesus Christ.

Confutation of them that thinke it lawfull to turne the grace of God into wantonnesse: because the Lord in the riches of his goodnesse toucheth to our age and people, more light and knowledge, by the ministerie and labours of many faithfull Preachers, than he hath graunted to former times and forraine Nations, that therefore they be satisfied with the hauiog of instructions, notwithstanding they yeeld no obedience to them, nor take any pleasure in them, but loath them in their hearts, and continually rebell against them. They are iust of the same minde, as those whom Ieremy vpbraideth with their trusting in lying words, saying, *the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, this is the Temple of the Lord.* And so they pray sed it, and yet polluted it: they put their confidence in it, and yet by peruertering of it, they make their case farre worse by it. That place which God ordained to be as it were an habitation for himselfe, and a sanctuary for his Seruants, they most impiquely made a den of theeues. They darst, *steale, murder, and commit adultery, and sweare falsely by his name, and came and stand in that house, and say, we are deliuered, though we haue done all these abominations.* And they are in the same state with those whom our Sauour threatneth to dischayne and exclude, when they should presumptuously challenge acquaintance with him, for his being among them, sayings *Lord, Lord, open vnto vs, for we haue eaten in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streetes: But hee shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence yee are: Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquitie.*

Ier. 7. 9. 10.

Luke 13. 26. 27.

Instruction

Instruction for those that inioy the Sunne-shine of the Gospell, by the sound and ministerie and preaching thereof, to call themselves to a reckoning, and take an account, how much grace they haue gotten, and what seruice they haue performed, and how sure they haue made their Election and Calling, by the opportunitie of Gods holy Word, reliding and shining among them. They must remember, that, to whom much is committed, of him much shall be required: the longer the day of their learning hath beene, and the lighter, the more worke and seruice will be expected at their hands, and the better. Wee doe not looke for so much fruit of a tree that hath growne but a few yeeres, in a ground that is barren, as of that which hath growne many yeeres in a soyle that is fertile. And therefore it becometh them that haue beene taught most, and haue professed most, to shew themselves of all others, most godly, most righteous, most mercifull, meeke, patient, humble, sober, diligent in their vocations, and best qualified with all excellent vertues.

Reproofo and terrour, for the great multitude of professed rebels against the Lord and his Word, in these dayes: The more Religion and Christianitie is taught, the more, almost in all places, it is contemned and trampled on: and as the loathsomenesse and danger of sinne is discovered, so is the loue and practise thereof increased. What generation euer saw more pride and vnthriftinesse, more gluttony and drunkennesse, quarrels and contentions, than ours? Neuer any. What generation euer heard more blasphemies, cursings, lyes, slanders, filthy and malicious speeches, than ours? Neuer any. What generation euer felt more wrongs and injuries, more horrible crueltie and oppressions, than ours? Neuer any. What generation euer knew all kindes of iniquities more common, more odious, more audacious and impudent, than ours? Wee neuer reade of any.

The raine of the Word of God that by the vertue of the Spirit, should cause the sweet flowers of Grace to flourish among vs, by the venome of sinfull mens corruptions, doth  
occasion



occasion the wicked weedes of sinne to waxe exceeding rancke and noysome.

[*Yee haue despised, &c.*] The greatest offence against the Word of God is to contemne it. See Chap. 13. 13.

Doctr. 2.

Verse 26. *I will also laugh at your calamitie, and mocke when your feare commeth.*

Verse 27. *When your feare commeth like an horrible desolation, and your destruction approacheth as a Whirle-winde: when affliction and anguish shall come vpon you.*

Verse 28. *Then shall they call vpon mee, but I will not heare: they shall seeke mee early, but they shall not finde me.*

**T**HE cause of their miserie hauing beene expressed apparantly in the premisses, the grieuousnesse thereof is in these words described: as first, that they shall be comfortlesse and helpelesse; the Lord shewing himselfe righteously vnmmercifull to them, in *laughing at them,* and *scorning them*: Not that there is in the Lord any disposition of laughter or scorning, but for mans capacitie, hee is often in the Scriptures resembled to man, with humane affections, as here, because hee will not care for them, but cast them off, hee is said to deride them; for that it is a misery not to be relieved in misery, but a double corsie and woe, to be iested at of those who onely can helpe them.

Secondly, the manner of the plague, amplified with so many words and similies, doth proue it to be grieuous: as because it will be terrible, and make them sore afraid, it is called by the name of *feare*, and it is said to *come like an horrible desolation*, the word properly signifieth a furious breach or ruine of any thing, breaking and over-throwing whatsoever it meeteth with: and it is compared to a *Whirle-winde*, which commeth sodainely and with great violence, not onely blowing vp dust and chaffe, and light matter, but blowing downe oftentimes trees and houses, and strong buildings.

Thirdly, the effects which it will worke, shall giue testimonie sufficient of the sharpnesse of Gods proceedings against

against them: for that their hearts shall be filled with affliction and anguish, and their tongues shall be compelled through extremitie of torment and danger, to cry to him whom they haue contemned, but to no purpose, and without successe: for hee will not answere them, that is, grant their requests, but will testifie his wrath, and increase their sorrow, by denying the things they pray for: yea, the greatnesse of their distresse shall inforce them to seek him earnestly, very diligently and carefully: they shall spare no paines, yea, they shall breake their sleepes in the morning, and yet shall not finde him gracious and mercifull to them in their griefes and perplexities.

Dott. 1.

*Therefore will I laugh, &c.*] Contemptuous and obstinate sinners shall finde no fauour from God in their miserie.

Isay 27. 11.

They regarded it not when it was offered vnto them, as thinking they should neuer stand in neede of it: and now when they would haue it, they shall haue all testimonies of his hatred in stead thereof: hee will not in pittie bemoane their case, but as one that were glad of their trouble, will mocke at them: hee will not comfort them with his presence and promises, nor helpe them with his hand, but terrifie them more with his angry countenance, and pursue them with addition of iudgements. *It is a people of none understanding, (saith one of the Prophets) therefore he that made them shall not haue compassion on them, and hee that formed them shall haue no mercy on them.* What then will issue vpon

Isay 30. 13.

it? *Therefore their iniquitie shall be vnto them, as a breach that falleth, or a swelling in an high wall, whose breaking commeth sodainly in a moment, and the breaking thereof is like the breaking of a Potters pot, which is broken without pittie, and in the breaking thereof is not found a sheard to take fire out of the hearth, or to take water out of the pit.* And another of the Prophets saith, *My God will cast them away, because they did not obey him.*

Hos. 9. 17.

Reason 1.

First, it standeth with equitie, that the Lord should haue them in dirision when their punishment commeth vpon them, for that they had his Messengers and Counsels

in dirision, vwhen his Word was sent vnto them.

Secondly, hee will in time make them a mocking-stocke to his people, his seruants shall shew at them with ioy for their fall, and clap their hands at their destruction; and therefore himselfe will haue no commiseration on them: for albeit hee is more infinitely pittifull than the best men can be, yet where hee forbiddeth his people to shew pittie, and would haue them to professe their loue to him, by insultation ouer his enemies, there his mercy is not to be expected.

Thirdly, his mercy, pittie, and compassion is effectuell, whom hee pittieeth, he also preserueth and deliuereth, which is a fauour peculiarly appropriated to those whom he hath chosen.

Terror for sinfull men, which prouoke Gods displeasure, and incense his indignation, in hope to finde him kinde and gracious. For, take they not boldnesse to wallow in wickednesse, and to drinke in iniquitie as a beast doth water, to neglect repentance, yea, stand armed to resist it, vpon this ground, that God is mercifull, that Christ will saue all, or if any perish, it must be others and not they? they haue sealed themselves a Patent for saluation and safetie. *Wee shall haue peace* (say they) *althoughee wee walke in the stubbornesse of our owne hearts.* But such presumptuous peruersers of Gods goodnesse haue their answer already if they would take it, they are told that, *The Lord will not be mercifull vnto them, but his wrath and ieaousie shall smake against them, and euery curse that is written in his Law shall light vpon them.*

For what meane the Scriptures by tempting of God, if this be not to tempt him? Doe they not attempt to set his attributes at variance by parts-taking, when they would haue his Mercy to maintaine rebels in euill, doing against his Iustice?

Consolation for them that heare his Word and obey it, that hearken to his counsell and obserue it, that inioy his loue in their good estate, and found their happinesse vpon his fauour, though they fall into afflictions, yet they shall not

2.

3.

Use 1.

Deut. 29. 20.

2.



nience (wee doubt) will more fully informe them hereafter, than all that wee can speake to the point, may doe for the present.

2.

Instruction, to prevent these desperate and hellish feares, by holy and lively feares; as to tremble at the threatnings of the Law; before thou hast sinned, and so eschew that which is euill: to tremble at the sight of thine offences, after thou hast sinned, and so come to repentance: to behold how others are punished for their transgressions, and so take heede thou commit not the like, or continue not in the like, but let the strokes vpon them be instructions to thee, and be thou admonished by their miseries.

Doctr. 3.

*Then shall they call vpon me, &c.* The despisers of Gods word, are many times driuen to make bootelesse prayers in their distresses.

The world goeth hard with them, and in a wofull plight they are, when they must put themselues to a peece of worke which they haue euer deemed so tedious, and burdensome, as to pray, and cry, and earnestly to seeke God for succour, nothing but extreame necessity can compell them to this, notwithstanding the time will come, when their neede shall require it, when they must needes be brought to it, and yet be nothing holpen by it.

Esay 1. 15.

Psal. 18. 41.

Job 21. 9.

The Lord fore-knoweth when they will come, and therefore hath already determined not to be found of them in fauour, not to be intreated to shew them mercy; for so he telleth them: *When you shall stretch out your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: and though you make many prayers, I will not heare.* David saw experience of Gods severity in reiecting the supplications of his sinfull aduersaries, as himselfe testifieth; *They cryed, but there was none to saue them, euen vnto the Lord, but hee answered them not.* And Job also before those dayes, had obserued, and knew well that the wicked were wont to call vpon the Lord in their calamities, and at their deaths, but lost their labour: For (saith hee) *What hope hath the hypocrite when hee hath heaped up riches, if God take away his soule? Will God heare his cry when trouble cometh*

with upon him? Reade *Hosea 5.6. Prov. 28.9. Iere. 11.21.*

First they remaine wicked, and regard wickednes in their hearts, and therefore themselves, their prayers, and all other pretended seruices, are offensive to God, according to the prouerbe, *The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, Prov. 15.8.* Reason 1.

Secondly, their prayers proceed not from faith, humility, and truth of heart: their desire is not so much for Gods fauour, as their owne deliuerance, and indemnity: they are not the Holy Ghost, but the labour of the flesh. Therefore doth the Psalmist complaine, saying, *When he slew them, they sought him, and returned, and sought God earely: but they flattered him with their mouth, and dissembled with him with their tongue: for their heart was not upright, neyther were they faithfull in his covenant.* And therefore doth *Hosea* complaine in these words; *They haue not cryed vnto me with their hearts, when they howled vpon their beddes: they assembled themselves for corne and wine, and they rebell against me.* 2.

Thirdly, it is a righteous thing with God, to repell their prayers, which haue so long time repelled his word: *Hee hath cryed, and they would not heare; and therefore is it not iust that they should cry, and he not heare? Zach. 7. 13.* 3.

Confutation of them which thinke that prayers are at euery moment in their powers ready to be made, and alwaies effectually to saue them from hell, at what time soeuer they make them, although they proceed not from true faith and repentance. All the Imposters in the world illude not men so much, nor do them the twentieth part of that mischief, as they bring vpon themselves, by the vaine and harmfull confidence, that God will shew them mercy, whensoever they be willing to finde it, and not refuse their prayers, at whatsoeuer time they list to offer them. They presume of a power ouer his affections, and a command in his eares, that when they would be pardoned, hee must be gracious vnto them, and when they would be heard, hee must not delay to giue them audience. The Diuell, and an hard heart hath enchanted them, to belecue that they can inchant him, to

M

grant

Use 1.

not be forsaken in them: he will pittie them, and not laugh at them: his compassion shall be for their comfort, and not his vntimercifulnesse for their discouragement.

1st. 31. 20.

That which hee professeth concerning *Ephraim*, whom hee had so sharply corrected, belongeth to all the rest of his people, whom with his rebukes and rods hee nurreth. *Euer since I spake against him (in threatnings and appoynting the execution thereof) I still remembered him: therefore my bowels are troubled for him: I will surely haue compassion vpon him, saith the Lord.*

Dott. 2.

*When your feare, &c.]* Boldnesse in committing of sinne will make the punishment thereof very terrible.

When they reiected his counsels, when they regarded not his promises, when they rust at his menacings, they little thought of trembling at his iudgements, they seemed safe for the present, and therefore dreamed of safety perpetuall, but plagues must come, and will dismay them with their very looks, and afterwards most heauilie presse and crush them with their waight and violence.

Dan. 5. 6.

*Belsazzar*, that execrable King of Babel, was meruelous hardy, euen to profess defiance against the God of heauen, by the profanation of his holy Vessels, and by other testimonies of despight; but so soone as he saw his doome written vpon the wall, though as yet hee vnderstood not the meaning of it, *his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the ioynts of his loynes were loosed, and his knees smote one against the other.* We may reade also of *Saul*

1 Sam. 28. 10.

in what wofull perplexitie hee was, when the Diuell, (whom hee was wont to obey more than God) in *Samuels* likenes, deliuered to him Gods message, and told him what euill would befall him on the morrow; the apprehension of perill caused him through feare, to fall downe flat on the ground like a beast, so that all which were present had much ado to make him rise and take food, although hee had beene a whole day fasting, Reade *Dent. 28. 65. 66. Leuit. 26. 36. Psal. 14. 25. Isay 35. 24. Iob 15. 21. 24. and 18. 11. and 27. 20.*

First,



First, their miserie and punishment shall come vnlooked for, and before they are aware, as a Theefe in the night; as sorrow vpon a woman in trauell, and as *Whirlewinde*, as our Text doth testifie. *Reason 1.*

Secondly, they come forcibly (as the comparisons where by they are described doe shew) and will preuaile. They can neyther be preuented by policie, nor resisted with power, nor bought out with mony, nor auoyded with flight, nor by any meanes escaped. *2.*

Thirdly, they consist not in tollerable crosses, in temporary aduersitie, whereof there is hope and likelihood of an end, but in importable torments, in eternall perdition, in perfect woe and misery, that will endure without mitigation, for euer. *3.*

Fourthly, the vnquenchable flame of Gods indignation, which can neuer be extinguished, and vncessant clamours of their guilty consciences, which can neuer be appeased, will proue so hydeous and horrible vnto them, as that they shall be affrighted by them for euer. *4.*

Terrour for them that harden their hearts, and imbolden their mindes to take libertie to doe that which their lusts require. They are vnwilling to haue any of their wayes thought to be vnlawfull: and when they cannot chule, they would yet haue the knowledge of perill concealed from them. (It was no pleasant discourse for *Felix* to heare *Paul* disputing of *righteousnesse* and *temperance*, and of the iudgement to come, he could not but tremble at it.) And if they cannot obtrayne silence of those things, then they labour to perswade their hearts that the things be not true which are spoken: they wincke with their eyes, and tell themselves there is no danger: they stop their eares and say, wee heare nothing that maketh against vs. But fooles they are, and foolishly insatuate their owne soules: for that which they will not see, they shall be made to see; and that which they refused to heare, they shall be inforced to suffer: and what dreads and perplexities, what pangs and paines, their audacious presumption will bring vpon them, their owne experience. *Vse 1.* *Acts 24. 26.*

rience (wee doubt) will more fully informe them hereafter, than all that wee can speake to the point, may doe for the present.

2.

Instruction, to prevent these desperate and hellish feares, by holy and liuely feares; as to tremble at the threatnings of the Law; before thou hast sinned, and so eschew that which is euill: to tremble at the sight of thine offences, after thou hast sinned, and so come to repentance: to behold how others are punished for their transgressions, and so take heede thou commit not the like, or continue not in the like, but let the strokes vpon them be instructions to thee, and be thou admonished by their miseries.

Doctr. 3.

*Then shall they call vpon me, &c.* The despisers of Gods word, are many times driuen to make bootlesse prayers in their distresses.

The world goeth hard with them, and in a wofull plight they are, when they must put themselues to a peece of worke which they haue euer deemed so tedious, and burdensome, as to pray, and cry, and earnestly to seeke God for succour, nothing but extreame necessity can compell them to this, notwithstanding the time will come, when their neede shall require it, when they must needs be brought to it, and yet be nothing holpen by it.

Doctr. 4.

The Lord fore-knoweth when they will come, and therefore hath already determined not to be found of them in fauour, not to be intreated to shew them mercy; for so he telleth them: *When you shall stretch out your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: and though you make many prayers, I will not heare.* David saw experience of Gods seuerity in reiecting the supplications of his sinfull aduersaries, as himselfe testifieth; *They cryed, but there was none to saue them, euen vnto the Lord, but hee answered them not.* And Job also before those dayes, had obserued, and knew well that the wicked were wont to call vpon the Lord in their calamities, and at their deaths, but lost their labour: For (saith hee) *What hope hath the hypocrite when hee hath heaped up riches, if God take away his soule? Will God heare his cry when trouble cometh*

Esay 1.15.

Psal. 18.41.

Job 21.9.

with vpon him? Reade *Hosea 5.6. Prov. 28.9. Iere. 11.21.*

First they remaine wicked, and regard wickednes in their hearts, and therefore themselves, their prayers, and all other pretended seruices, are offensive to God, according to the prouerbe, *The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord, Prov. 15.8.* Reason 1.

Secondly, their prayers proceed not from faith, humility, and truth of heart: their desire is not so much for Gods fauour, as their owne deliuerance, and indemnity: they are not the Holy Ghost, but the labour of the flesh. Therefore doth the Psalmist complaine, saying; *When he slew them, they sought him, and returned, and sought God earely: but they flattered him with their mouth, and dissembled with him with their tongue: for their heart was not upright, neyther were they faithfull in his covenant.* And therefore doth *Hosea* complaine in these words; *They haue not cryed vnto me with their hearts, when they howled vpon their beddes: they assembled themselves for corne and wine, and they rebell against me.* Ps. 78.34.36.37. 2.

Thirdly, it is a righteous thing with God, to repell their prayers, which haue so long time repelled his word: *Hee hath cryed, and they would not heare; and therefore is it not iust that they should cry, and he not heare? Zach. 7.13.* 3.

Confutation of them which thinke that prayers are at euery moment in their powers ready to be made, and alwaies effectually to saue them from hell, at what time soeuer they make them, although they proceed not from true faith and repentance. All the Imposters in the world illude not men so much, nor do them the twentieth part of that mischief, as they bring vpon themselves, by the vaine and harmfull confidence, that God will shew them mercy, whensoever they be willing to finde it, and not refuse their prayers, at whatsoeuer time they list to offer them. They presume of a power ouer his affections, and a command in his eares, that when they would be pardoned, hee must be gracious vnto them, and when they would be heard, hee must not delay to giue them audience. The Diuell, and an hard heart hath enchanted them, to belecue that they can inchant him, to



grant them a Superledeas against the proceeding of his own verity and iustice; God hath promised at all times pardon and repentance, but hee hath not promised at all times repentance.

2.

Instruction, not to be too hopefull of the estate of gracelesse people, which spend their dayes in impiety, impurity, vnrighteousnes, maliciousnes, and all manner of rebellions against the Law of the Lord, and seeme to finish the same, at their last houres, with some shew of false deuotion.

As it is dangerous to vnderake iudgement, and passe sentence as though thou hadst a place in the throne of God, so is it not safe to applaud their ends ouermuch, vnlesse their repentance be apparent and vnfeined, lest thou or others might take encouragement to walke in their steppes, or be rash and ready to iustifie any whom God hath condemned.

Iob 27.10.

And this may also incite men to pray both conscionably and constantly, at all seasons, and vpon all occasions, in wefare, and woe, in prosperity and aduersity, performing it as a seruice to God, as well as respecting their owne commodity, so shall they get skill to pray faithfully in their distresses: so shall they haue acquaintance with the Lord, when they stand in neede of his helpe. The neglect of this is alleadged by *Iob*, as a cause why the Lord regardeth not the cries of the wicked, at his death, and in his misery: *For doth hee delight in the Almighty (saith hee) and call vpon him at all times?* And this is with due care to be taken heede of, that as wee omit not to pray often, so wee accustome not our selues to pray carelesly: for they that mocke God, in taking his name in vaine, and seriously seeke not his honour and fauour in their Petitions, shall in time finde themselves deceiued in so doing, when they shall be frustrate of that mercy and comfort, which they hoped to obtaine by them.

3.

Consolation to the godly, that they are priuiledged with the happy and comfortable fruit of their prayers, they alone can offer vp holy and acceptable requests to God, and none but they shall haue their desires granted. Hee inuiteth them to come vnto him, hee commandeth them to *call vpon him*

*time of their trouble, and promisseth to deliver them. Faith and faithfull mens examples assure them that no misery can be miserable to such, so long as they haue a tongue or an heart to cry to God, and God hath an care to hearken to them, or an hand that is ready to help them. Prayer brought succour to Ionah against the boisterous billowes and surges of the Sea: Prayer brought succour to David against floods of wickednes, and snares of death, Psal. 18. 4. 5.*

*Verse 29. Because they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the feare of the Lord.*

*Verse 30. They would none of my counsell, but despised all my correction.*

**H**ee insisteth still vpon the point in hand, and iustificth his accusation, by repetition of those sinnes which would cause them to be so fearefully plagued, and in reckoning them vp, hee beginneth with that wherewith hee had ended his expostulation, *their hatred of knowledge*: and whereas before hee vpbraideth them with *the refusall of Wisdomes* gracious offers; and *that they regarded them not*, hee maketh it good by this, that they *chose not the feare of the Lord*, they would not learne to be religious and godly when meanes and opportunities were ministred vnto them. And before it was said vnto them, *Yee haue despised all my counsell, and would none of my correction*. Heere it is said of them, *they would none of my counsell, but haue despised all my correction*: the sense is the same, though the words be somewhat varied.

*Verse 31. Therefore shall they eate of the fruit of their owne way, and be filled with their owne deuises.*

**T**He former two verses contained a rehearfall of the complaint, and this a reuenge of the threatning, wherein he declareth their destruction to be iust, and according to their owne deserts, by a similitude in this manner: Euen as it is equall that the planters or plow-men should eate of the fruits

or graine, which they haue nourished or sowne, and laboured for; especially if they haue increased much fruit, or sown much corne, or taken much paines, that then they should be partakers of the labours of their hands more plentifully. So standeth it with the righteousnesse of God, to giue to these, *that they may eate of the fruit of their owne way*: that is, taste of that sorrow and confusion which their dissolute liues and froward hearts doe duely demerite. *And be filled with their owne deuises*, albeit they could neuer make an end of inuenting and practising that which is euill, yet they shall be sated at last, and surcharged with the effects thereof, such fulnesse of shame, griefe, feare, desperation, and all manner of torment, that they shall feelee themselves ouer-burdened therewith, as is the stomacke when it is oppressed with too much meate, and made sicke by a surfer.

Doctr. 1.

Wicked men make themselves miserable by their own sinnes.

They may certainly conclude of punishment, and looke for it; for come it will without failing, and whatsoever they suffer, they may thank themselves for: it is of their owne brewing, and therefore they are put to drinke it: it is of their owne sowing, and therefore they are constrained to reape it. Reade *Iob 4.8. Prou. 22.8. Hosea 10.13. and 14.2. Jerem. 5.25. Gal. 6.7.8.* See the point handled *Chap. 11.3.18.*

Verse 32. *For the turning away of the simple slayeth them: and the prosperity of fooles destroyeth them.*

**T**He former part of this verse is annexed to the premisse as an explication and confirmation of the same; for what are the *wayes* which *simple ones* (that is, such as haue no discretion to get knowledge when it is offered) *shall eate the fruit of*? *Their turning away*, their wilfull refusall of Wisedomes instructions, which they will neyther learne, nor obey, nor with any liking so much as looke towards: and what are the *fruits* which such sinfull wayes doe cause these simple ideots to *eate of*? death and damnation: *they slay them*. If they bring not violence vpon their bodies, yet they bring both



both body and soule to perdition for euer. The latter part sheweth an obiection that might be made, and often is, against this, and the former sentences of Wisedome: Doth contemptuous turning away slay the simple? And, doe despisers see the fruit of their owne wayes? How commeth it to passe then, that of all others, they commonly thriue best, and few are found so prosperous, and in so good estate as they? The answer is made, That the prosperity of fooles shall destroy them, both in hastening their iudgements, and making it the more grievous: and so stopperh not, but furthereth the execution of Wisedomes threatnings.

Sinfulnesse doth murder them that will not learne wisdome, to beware of it. Doctr. 1.

There is another saying in this Booke, which doth much accord with this our text, and in meaning is altogether the same, *Instruction is euill to him that forsaketh the way, and hee that hateth correction shall die.*

Saint Paul acknowledgeth it to haue beene his owne case, whiles he liued in ignorance, he thought himselfe to be safe, and happy; *I was once aline* (saith he) *without the Law*, but after that he was better informed, he found the guilefulnesse and cruelty of sinne, how it had deceived and slaine him; in which estate hee had continued and perished; if Christ, by grace, had not delivered him.

Zophar resembleth it to a dangerous poyson, which is so much the more pernicious in effect, by how much it is more pleasant in taste, whereby wretched fooles are allured to deuoure it, and therefore declaring the madnesse and miserie of euery one of them, hee saith, *When wickednesse was sweet in his mouth, and hee bid it vnder his tongue, and fauoured it, and would not forsake it, but kept it close in his mouth, then his meate was turned in his bowells, the gall of Aspes was in the mids of him, hee hath sucked the gall of Aspes, and the Vipers tongue shall slay him.* Job 20. 12. 13. &c.

First, it seperateth man from God, who alone is the fountaine of life, and that to those, which are vnited vnto him, and haue communion with him. Reason I.

2. Secondly, it killeth and destroyeth, it bringeth impotent persons to destruction, by force of his curse: his threatenings with the truth and righteousness thereof doe take hold upon them for their transgressions.

3. Thirdly, the diuell is a doer in this businesse, who in malice, enuying mans felicity, and wanting power by strength of hand to cast them into hell, doth practise craftily to lead them thither, by inticing them to rebell against their Maker that he should condemne them.

Use 1.

Instruction, not to be familiar with any sinne, nor to be deceived: suffer not thy selfe to be illuded with the flatteries of it: it is a cruell cut-throat, a bloody murderer, it woundeth mortally all those which mistrust it least, and least spareth such as love it. And therefore it is the safest way, to doe to it as it would doe to thee: pursue it with a strict examination of thy former life, vntill thou shalt apprehend it, and then be sure that thou shew it no fauour, but execute vengeance vpon it, with indignation and detestation: strike at it with the sword of Gods righteous Law, wound it with godly griefe and feare and remorse, and neuer haue done with it, so long as any life remaineth in it.

2. Folly of them that preferre this hideous monster, before all things, before welfare, before comfort, before credit, before safety, before saluation. How many are there to be seene almost in all places, which shew themselves to affect this more dearly than all their friends beside? Brethren, parents, children, yoke-fellowes, and best benefactors, are all strangers to them in comparison to this. Yea, in kindnesse to this they shew enmity to God, and make him their enemy: sinne hath innumerable more friends to take his part, and souldiers to fight for him, among the sonnes of men throughout all the world, than the Lord himselfe hath.

Doctr. 2.

*And the prosperity, &c.]* A prosperous estate without grace is passing hurtfull.

Luke 6.24.25.

James 5.1.

Our Sauour bestoweth woes vpon worldlings that are rich, that are full, that laugh, that are magnified and praised of all men. And such doth S. James wish to weep & howle for their misery.

every that should come vpon them. Read *Iob 21. 7. 8. 9. &c.*  
*and 22. 17. 18. 19. Psal. 37. and 37. Esay 2. 7. Ezech. 7. 19.*

First, the Lord in hatred bestoweth great things vpon many of his reprobate enemies, with purpose to plague them therewith, that *their table may be a snare vnto them, and their prosperity their ruine, Psal. 69. 22. Their way prospereth: and they are in wealth, that he may plucke out like sheepe for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter.* When men dry vp the milke of vnruely heifers, and put them into fatte pastures to gather flesh, is it not their intent, eyther to kill them shortly, or to sell them to the Shambles? Euen such is Gods husbandry in the vsage of beastly reprobates, as *Pharao, Saul, Ieroboam, Herod, and a huge number of others* doe know and feele by experience. *Reason 1.*

Secondly, as his counsell hath destinated their prosperity to such a purpose, so will his iustice bring them to such a change, that those which haue their time to liue in pleasure on earth, must at the last lie vnder the burden of torment in hell, *Luke 16. 25. Reu. 18. 7.*

Thirdly, the abundance of earthly commodities, delights, preferments, are occasions of great euils to godles persons, and make them fit for destruction; for their mindes are puffed vp, & their hearts much hardned by them: they grow secure and carelesse, yea contemners of God and his word: they trust to their wealth & power, and imbolden themselves in couetousnes, cruelty, insolency, luxury, and in all kinde of enormous vices, *Psal. 10. 2. 3. 4. &c.*

Instruction, to seeke for wisdom and the feare of God, before riches, or honour, that thou mayest haue power to order them aright, if euer God see it meete to bestow them vpon thee. They which haue much without them, and little or nothing within them, are like children set vpon wild horses, which because they want skill and strength to gouerne, will plunge them, and throw them, & spoyle them, neither only is grace to be laboured for first, but also most, that it exceede our worldly welth at all times: otherwise a godly man may be cast downe by his possessions, if he grow greater than good.



*David* confesseth he tooke a fall by too much security in his prosperous estate. And king *Vzziah* went lame to his grave by presuming too far, when he was so highly aduanced. The holy Prophet *Agur* had as much humility as wee haue, and could as well rule his affections as we can; yet hee durst not trust himselfe with excessse of riches, lest hee should thereby waxe impious and proud against God, but prayed as seriously against immoderate wealth, as ouermuch want, and stood in no lesse dread of superfluity, than of indigency: Secondly, not to be impatient, or discontented, if the Lord diere, being so apt to surfet, and detaine that from vs, which hee seeth would be vnwholesome and hurtfull to vs: Thirdly, not to be distempered or discouraged, when wee see the wicked aloft in dignity, the higher they are, the lower they shall fall: neither to fret at them, or liue like them, when they fill their houses with precious things, their excessive store and superabundance will prooue to be a floud and inuadation, to swallow them vp, and drowne them.

Verse 33. *But hee that obeyeth me shall dwell safely from feare of euill.*

**L**Astly, this point is amplified, and so shut vp by the contrary; namely, the behavior and condition of the godly; altogether opposite to that of the simple ones, scorner, and fooles formerly described: for these heere commended despise not Wisdome, nor turne away from her, but hearken attentively & yeeld obedience to her: and therefore they liue not in danger of death, of plagues and punishments, but dwell safely, are out of perill of destruction, or of any hurt, though not exempted from all crosses & sufferings, and be quiet from feare of euill, not onely no euill it selfe, such as would be noysome and pernicious, shall affray them, but not so much as a suspicion & dread of it shall goe to his heart to dismay him, yet because no man can perfectly obey Wisdome in all things, the best in their infirmities are sometimes perplexed and troubled with doubts, but neuer subdued or vicerly discouraged by them. See Chap. 10. verse 9.



# AN EXPOSITION OF THE SECOND

Chapter of the Prouerbs.

## CHAPTER 2.

Verse 1. *My Sonne, if thou wilt receiue my words, and  
hide my Commandements with thee.*

**T**HE Spirit and Wisedome of God ha-  
uing denounced most fearefull and  
vnauoydable iudgements against ob-  
stinate contemners, doth leaue them;  
and commeth now to teach and in-  
courage such as will be tractable :  
whom in this Chapter hee assisteth,  
partly by precepts, prescribing the du-  
ties which they are to performe; and partly by promises, as-  
suring them of the good successe which they shall not faile  
to finde. The Duties are set downe generally in this first  
Verse, and more particularly in the three next following.  
The generall dutie is to giue due entertainment to Gods holy  
Messages, first, by *receiuing his words*, not onely to heare  
them when they are graciously tendered, but gladly and wil-  
lingly imbrace them with vnderstanding, and be so affected  
and moued in heart with the power of them, as to desire  
and endeavour to obey them : and then, by *hiding his Com-  
mandements*,

*mandements*, to keepe them carefully being received, which is expresse and made lightsome by a comparison taken from the charinelle of men in preserving of their mony, their iewels, or ought else that is precious vnto them: for such things they vse to lay vp safely, and keepe them vnder locke and key, that they be not robbed or beguiled of them.

*Doctr. 1.*

*Receiue, &c.]* Men are nothing the better for hearing of Gods word vnlesse they imbarce and entertaine it.

*Iob 22. 22.*

It is wholesome counsell that *Eliphaz* giueth to *Iob*, if his ground and application of it had beene answerable: *Acquaint thy selfe, I pray thee, with God, and make peace: thereby thou shalt haue prosperitie. Receiue, I pray thee, the Law of his mouth, and lay vp his words in thy heart.* What made the

*1 Thes. 2. 13.*

godly *Thessalonians* to grow so fast in goodnesse, and the Apostle to take so great contentment in their faithfulness, patience, constancie, and happinesse? himselfe doth yeeld the reason; when hee saith; *For this cause thanke wee God without ceasing, that when yee receiued of vs the word of the preaching of God, yee receiued it not as the word of men, but (as it is indeede) the word of God, which worketh in you that beleeue.* And what was the cause why all the grounds, pathy, stonie, thornie, and good, hauing seede cast vpon them, yet one onely, the good, answered to the trauell and charges of the sower? Because some receiued not all, and others not well, and none but that one were prepared for it: the highway would not admit of it, that it might so much as enter: the rockie places would not afford it rooting: and the thornes would not suffer it to ripen. Reade *Chap. 8. 10. James 1. 21. Heb. 6. 7. Iohn 1. 11. 12.*

*Reason 1.*

First, the internall parts of man, as the minde, the affections, the soule, and conscience, are sicke of sinne, and wounded with the corruptions of flesh and bloud, and thence proceed all the disorders of senses, of speeches and of actions: if therefore this medicine be not internally receiued, and inwardly applyed to the diseased parts, it can neuer cure the maladies of them.

Secondly,



Secondly, the Gospell is preached to all promiscuously : both good and bad doe heare it : the worst are sometimes at Sermons, or may be so, as well as the best : but wee may say with the Apostle, *The word that they heare doth not profit them, because it is not mixed with faith in those that heare it;* so that it hath not so profitable a force where it doth not finde a faithfull attention. 2.

Thirdly, this gift being so rare, so precious, and so invaluable, the refusall of it must needs be as contemptuous : and therefore Gods kinde proffer by man so vnkindely reiected, is made altogether vnprofitable, though not vselesse : for it turneth to be effectuell against their soules, that will not sucke of the vertue of it to be saued by it. See Chap. 9. 3.  
verse 5.

*Hide, &c.]* They shall enioy the comfort and benefit of the word, which are carefull to retayne it. See Chap. 10. Doctr. 2.  
verse 14.

Verse 2. *And cause thine eares to hearken vnto wisdom,*  
*and incline thine heart to vnderstanding.*

**T**HE particular duties are the exercise of those meanes whereby knowledge and grace is obtained, which being foure in number, two are contained in this Verse, one in the third, and the last in the fourth. The former of the two, is attention of the eare, not hearing onely, but hearkening and diligent heede-taking to that which is spoken, making the eare to attend and hearken. The latter in place, though first in order, is the desire of the soule, which metaphorically, and by a comparison from corporall substances, hee calleth *the bowing of the heart*, the inforcing of it, by the helpe of the Spirit, to be religiously affected at Gods sacred Ordinances.

Whosoever will attayne to learne Wisdom, must apply both his eares and heart to the getting of it. Doctr.

Wicked men will keepe them together to satisfie their sinfull delights, and to harden themselves in that which is euill :

cuill : and godly men ought to separate them, when they seeke for holy comforts, and to confirme themselves in that which is good.

*Prou. 18. 15.*

Salomon hath another saying to the same purpose : *A wise heart getteth knowledge, and the care of the wise seeketh learning.* David maketh profession of the same practise, when

*Psal. 49. 3.*

hee saith : *The meditation of my heart is of knowledge : I will incline mine care to a Parable.* And Esay fore-telleth the force

*Isay 32. 3. 4.*

of Christ his grace by that effect : *The eares of them that heare shall hearken, and the heart of the foolish shall understand knowledge.* And the prayse giuen to the best ground, by our Sauour, is, that with an honest and good heart they heare the word and keepe it.

*Luke 8. 15.*

*Reason 1.*

*Isay 55. 3.*

*Prou. 4. 20.*

*Prou. 23. 12.*

*Ibid. 6. 26.*

First, God calleth for both in many places of his word, as, *Incline your eares and come vnto mee; heare, and your soule shall liue. My Sonne, hearken vnto my words, incline thine eares vnto my sayings, Apply thine heart to instruction, and thine eares to the words of knowledge. My Sonne, giue mee thine heart, and let thine eyes delight in my wayes.* So that his Commandement is dispised, his ordinance neglected, and his Promise not regarded, if eyther be detayned from him.

Secondly, the one is a necessary coadiutor and assistant to the other, and neyther in an ordinary manner doth worke alone : the care would be vnteachable without the government of the heart, and the heart erroneous without the seruice of the care.

*Vse 1.*

Instruction, to imploy them both in holy seruices, that neyther the one nor the other be idle or ill occupied : but at all opportunities be exercised in that which will edifie the soule, and binde vp the Conscience, least they be set to worke by Sathan and the corruption of the flesh, to peruert themselves with more infection, and so be workers of thine owne confusion. Naturally all mens eares are vncircumcised, deafe, and altogether vnapt to listen to Gods messages. And God, which best knoweth all mens hearts, doth testifie, that *The heart vn sanctified is deceitfull and wicked aboue all things.* And therefore if both the care and heart be not well warded continually

*Ier. 17. 9.*

continually by the Spirit of God, and a mans owne heedfull attendance, the one will be an open gate for lust, pride, enuy, couetousnesse, and all naughtie vices to enter in at, and the other a mansion for them to inhabite.

Confutation of those that boast of their good heart, how much they loue God, and how richly they are stored with Faith and other graces, and yet are obnoxious to the complaint of the Prophet: *Behold their eares are uncircumcised, & they cannot hearken: Behold, the word of the Lord is vnto them as a reproach, they haue no delight in it.* Yee can no way deale more rigorously with them, nor lay a heauier burthen vpon them, then by tasking them once or twise on the Sabbath to heare a Sermon. When Sathan cannot possesse their Ministers tongues with the Spirit of dumnesse, he possesseth such peoples eares with the spirit of deafenesse, and illudeth their mindes with the opinion of great knowledge.

And on the other side, they are no lesse subiect to re-proofe from God or their owne consciences, which for praise of men, or other carnall respects, bring their eares oft to the Word, but without the company of the heart, and so part a sunder those things which God would haue ioyned together. *Ezechiel* was haunted with such, and his Sermons frequented with diuers guilefull dissemblers, whose dissimulation was discovered vnto him by the Lord himselfe, saying, *They come vnto thee, as the people vseth to come: and my people sit before thee and heare thy words, but they will not doe them: For, with their mouthes they pretend loue, but their heart goeth after their conetousnesse.* Although then men see not the absence of the affections, yet God obserueth it, and taketh notice that they are no better than liuing corpses; bodies without the benefit of the soule, their harts traueilling another way, and attending vpon wickednesse. And from this vnhappy and carelesse hearing, spring manifold mischiefes, as hardnesse of heart, want of vnderstanding and profiting by the things which they heare, want of Faith, want of obedience to that which is commanded, want of sound comfort, want of godly sorrow, and want of all the fruits of the Spirit.



Verse 3. *Yea, if thou callest for wisdom and liftest up thy voice for understanding.*

**T**O the two former duties hee conditioneth with them to adioyne a third, if they would preuaile to get grace, and that is prayer: the manner whereof is prescribed in the words of *crying and lifting up the voice*, importing the frequencie of it, that it ought to be ardent and earnest.

*Doctr.*

Hearty prayer to God is a chiefe and excellent meanes to come by spirituall graces.

The Eare and the Heart must vse the benefit of the Tongue to offer requests to the Lord, that his fauour may satisfie their desires, and his blessing may prosper their endeouour.

*James 1. 5.*

This is taught by S. James when he saith; *If any of you lacke Wisdom, let him aske it of God, who giveth to all men liberally, or simply and without condition, and upbraideth no man, as men are wont to doe those for whom they haue done much, and it shall be given him.* This was practised often by David, saying; *Teach mee thy way, and I will walke in thy truth. Give mee understanding and I will keepe thy testimonies.*

*Psal. 86. 11.*

*Psal. 119. 34.*

*Reasons.*

First, because other things in the world are communicated by an ordinary course of nature: as Infidels and Pagans haue excelled and exceeded, in strength, Arts, policie, and riches, without seeking vnto the Lord, yet in diuine wisdom, or saluation of the soule, for knowledge, and comfort in religion, hee hath more immediately reserved the key of that treasure-house in his owne hand, and seldome or neuer vnlocketh the dore thereof not being intreated.

2.

Secondly, the best eares will grow dull of hearing, and the best heart will be slow in conceiuing, vnlesse there be a daily supply of Grace drawne downe from heauen by constant supplication to the Lord.

3.

Thirdly, God will therefore be instantly sought vnto, and vehemently importuned for the gifts of his Spirit, that hee may be as hartily praised, and as faithfully honoured with the same, by those vpon whom he vouchsafeth to bestow them.

*Instruction,*

Instruction, to bespeake a blessing, and deale with the Lord before-hand, as often as thou shalt haue access to any of his holy Ordinances: so thou shalt not neede to stand in doubt how thou shalt speede in reading the Scriptures, and hearing of Sermons, in partaking of the Sacraments, and such like exercises; if thou performe thy dutie in calling vpon him, hee will not faile of his goodnesse to prosper thy seruices. But hee looketh also to be, as it were, put in minde of his mercies and promises, by renewing of thy suite for the fruit and good effect of his Ordinances, when the exercise thereof is ended. How pleasing a thing it is to him, to haue his Promises, his Precepts, or any Doctrine deliuered by his ministerie, wrapped vp, and recited to him in Prayer by the hearers, that they may be beleeued and obeyed, and in all things duely obserued.

Vse 1.

Reproofe of them that eyther come without hope, or desire of any grace or future good, into the sanctuarie and presence of God, or else presume vpon the sufficiency of their owne iudicious mindes and ingenuous dispositions, to vnderstand, beleue, apply, remember, and doe, that which is spoken vnto them, that they neyther addresse themselves to heare the word, nor seeke assistance to keepe it, by priuate prayer in their owne places, nor ioine with the Minister or People in publike petitions and thanksgiuing, before or after the Sermon in the Congregation.

2.

So farre are they from crying or lifting vp their voyces, that it is tedious to them to lift vp hands or eyes, or to bowe the knees, or to be held so long in the Church among others that performe these duties. Many indeede conforme themselves to the example of others, but with a bodily gesture onely, and glad they are to heare *Amen*, and the Prayer ended, which they haue no part in, because they neyther bowed downe their hearts, nor raysed vp their desires, nor brought their soules into Gods presence with their Brethren.

Verse.

Verse 4. *If thou seekest her as Silver, and searchest for her as for hidden treasures.*

**T**HE fourth meanes is here lastly prescribed, that study and industry be vsed by reading, hearing, conferring and meditating. And this is set forth by a comparison, as men dig for silver, even with as much paines, great cost, earnest affection, and constant continuance therein till wee have found it, as the worldly man doth for silver or gold or any treasure, which is hid in some strong, close, and secret place, as in the ground, or within a wall, whither men cannot come but by toyle and great labour, and yet not impossible to be compassed by paines-taking.

Doctr. 1.

Grace is to be gotten with great diligence.

Prou. 8. 17.

Heb. 11. 12.

Mat. 7. 7.

Sloathfull persons are seldome seene to waxe rich in worldly possessions, especially if they liue by their owne hands, and not by that which is giuen or left vnto them: but spirituall sluggards are neuer knowne to thrive in vertues before they change their manners, and shake off their drowsie remissnesse and negligence. Wisedome is willing to grace them that sue to her, and labour for her, according to her owne saying: *I loue them that loue mee: and they that seeke mee carefully shall finde mee.* And therefore the Apostle desired the Hebrewes, that *Euery one of them would shew diligence to the full assurance of hope vnto the end, without sloathfulnesse.* And therefore also doth Christ our Saviour so vrge this durie from one degree to another with interposition of proportionable Promises: *Aske, and it shall be giuen you: seeke, and yee shall finde: knocke, and it shall be opened to you.* Reade Psal. 84. 6. 7. Cant. 3. 2. 3. 4. Isay 26. 9. Dan. 12. 4.

Reason 1.

First, the Lord will haue his Seruants hereby to giue a testimony of their loue to his heavenly gifts, and by the same to increase their estimation thereof. For things that are common and easily had, are commonly in small account, and little passed for: but that which is rare and hard to come by, is of the most, most highly regarded, as fire, and water, and wood, and



and other such matter be incomparably more vsfull and  
valuable than gold, pearles and precious stones, and yet be-  
cause the one sort is obuius to all, and euery one may eu-  
ery where meete with them, and the other found in few  
places, and therefore it commeth to passe that the better are  
despised in comparison of the baser.

Secondly, by constant diligence the integritie of the vp-  
right man is to be approued, and through default thereof the  
guile of the hypocrite bewrayed, that the one may receiue  
the prayse of his faithfulness, and the other beare the re-  
proach of his falshood. For, if wishing of grace, and talking  
of religion could suffice for saluation without this, dissem-  
blers should be in as good estate as sound-hearted Christi-  
ans. For who would not for credits sake giue entertainment  
to knowledge, wisdom and vertue, if they might be had  
without paines? And who would be deprived of the blisse of  
heauen, if hee might be transported to it without trauell?  
And therefore saith hee, who is Lord of Grace and glory,  
and hath the disposing of both; *Striue to enter in at the strait  
gate: for many, I say vnto you, will seeke to enter in and shall not  
be able.*

Luke 13.

Thirdly, the benefit that accreweth to them which pos-  
seffe this wisdom and vnderstanding doth counteruaile,  
and incomparably ouer-poyse all other the best commodi-  
ties that can possibly be gotten by the most serious study  
and labour, and therefore duely deserueth the greatest dili-  
gence in seeking of it. Gold can doe no man halfe so much  
good as it, nor other Iewels whatsoever may be named or  
brought on: the most precious riches are viler than dung, if  
they be compared with this celestiall treasure.

3.

Reproofof them that are wonderfully studious for hu-  
mane learning, and refuse no toyle for earthly commodities:  
they beate their braines, they breake their sleepe, they wast  
their strength about the getting of skill or substance, no Bee  
so busie: but for spirituall knowledge and pietie, to be in-  
formed in the way to saluation, they will not moue a foote,  
open the lips, or bend an eare: no Drone is so lazy. And

vs 1.

N

this

this is the cause why our times doe yeeld so many Artists, Linguists and learned Clarkes, and so few iudicious Christians: why there is such plentie of skilfull Artificers, which excell in all manner of Mechanicall Mysteries, and such paucitie of those whose hearts are soundly acquainted with the Mysteries of saluation.

Instruction: See Chap. 13. ver. 4. Use 2.

Doctr. 2.

*As for silver, &c.]* As great paines are to be taken for spiritual things, as for the best earthly commodities.

John 6. 27.

Our Sauour admonisheth vs to seeke and trauell for the more intently than for that which is most needfull for the body, euen food it selfe, whereby life is preserved, where he saith; *Labour not for the meate which perissheth, but for the meate which endureth to eternall life.*

Reason 1.

First, silver and treasures are not necessary, because the continuance of life is not necessary to happinesse, nor the necessary for the continuance of life, whereas Grace of necessity is expedient for the assurance of saluation.

2.

Secondly, the euent is doubtfull of paines bestowed about the getting of silver and treasures (for many seeke for much and yet cannot attaine to a moderate estate, though they neuer so prudent & industrious,) whereas they may presume of certaine successe, who duely endeouour to compass earthly riches: and often it falleth out that the labour for the one, preuayleth for both, yea, alwayes so farre as that he which vprightly seeketh graces for his soule shall neuer be destitute of necessities for his bodie: for wee haue Christ his faithfull promise to the contrary, *Mat. 6. 33.*

3.

Thirdly, there is an vnspokeable inequalitye between those base earthly trifles, and those precious heavenly treasures. They are temporarie and fugitiue, these are perpetuall and certaine: they faile men when they haue most need of helpe, and minister no comfort in their greatest distresse: these stand firmly to them in all places, in all estates, and in all times, in feares, in perils, in sorrowes, at death, and before the Iudgement-seate of Christ. They are called wicked *Mammon*, as being many times the occasions of much euill.

ners are corrupted by them in their consciences: diuers  
ceiue hurt by them in their bodies, and innumerable pro-  
ceiue mischief and ruine by them to their posteritie: but  
these are absolutely good, and onely doe men good, and  
ouer sayle to make them good. And therefore well is it  
said, and most truely; *Blessed is the man that findeth Wisdom,* Pro. 3. 13. 14. 15  
*and the man that getteth Vnderstanding: for the merchandise*  
*whereof is better than the merchandise of siluer, and the gaine*  
*whereof is better than gold. It is more precious than pearles,*  
*and all things that thou canst desire are not to be compared*  
*thereto.*

Instruction, to learne heauenly thrift, by an vsefull ob-  
seruation of their wayes who addiect themselves to thriue in  
the world: such industrie as they vse to increase their wealth  
and riches (so farre as is lawfull) let vs also exercise that wee  
may grow in grace and wisdom. They will subiect them-  
selves to halfe a bondage of an Apprenticeship to learne a  
commodious trade: they providently spend their thoughts  
in forecasts, and lose no time for mannaging of their weigh-  
tie affayres, but take the opportunities of all occasions: they  
are patient of paines, of heate, of cold, of hunger, of thirst,  
of foule wayes, of foule weather, and many other extremi-  
ties: they are frugall and abstenuous, auoyding all costly de-  
lights, and ynnecessary expences. There is scarce any thing  
so delectable and deare vnto them, but they will readily de-  
part with the same for their aduantage, if they be well bid  
for it. And this is further to be noted in them, that they  
chose such to conuerse with, as by whom they may gaine  
and get somewhat, and meddle as little as they may, with  
those that are chargeable, or any way an hinderance vnto  
them. In all these things we haue lessons to learne, and ex-  
amples to follow, as to submit ourselues to be instructed by  
Gods Ministerie: to apply our mindes to fruitfull medita-  
tions: to redeeme the time, and neglect no seasonable op-  
portunitie offered: to mortifie intemperancie and all inor-  
dinate affections, neyther to dote so vpon ought that is  
earthly, as to be ynwilling to leaue it for the cause of God,

Vse 1.



and that recompence which he promiseth. And finally, to consort with the godly, by whose fellowship wee may be bettered, and to abandon the societie of the wicked, whose company may proue pernicious and hurtfull.

2.

Reprooſe of thoſe who come ſo farre ſhort of ſeeking for wiſedome as for ſiluer, as that they be more remiſſe in digging for it, than for Iron, Braſſe, or Lead, or any more wortheleſſe mettals. They preferre coales, ſtone, marle, mortar, ſoyle and dung, and moſt contemptible matters before it. What doe they thinke of leſſe? what doe they ſpeake of leſſe? what doe they leſſe labour for? what doe they leſſe bewaile the want of? If they make not good Markers, they mourne: if their crop and cattell miſcarry, they cry out: if they ſuſtaine any loſſe in their eſtate, they are oppreſſed with grieve; onely their ignorance and graceleſſneſſe is nothing troubleſome to them.

Verſe 5. *Then ſhalt thou underſtand the feare of the Lord, and finde the knowledge of God.*

**A**fter the precepts and inſtructions, followeth the promiſe of good ſucceſſe, to every one that is tractable to obſerve theſe conditions propoſed, *Hee ſhall underſtand the feare of the Lord*; his heart and conſcience ſhall experimentally be acquainted with true pietie and religion, and ſoundly alſo ſeaſoned therewith: *And finde the knowledge of God*, his minde ſhall be adorned with an holy illumination, and made iudicious in the Scriptures and Doctrines of Faith: ſo that hee ſhall be able to diſcerne betweene light and darkeneſſe; betweene truth and errors, in meaſure competent for his ſalvation.

Doctr.

They that faithfully uſe good meanes to come to knowledge, ſhall certainly obtaine it.

In the ſearch of other things men may, and many times doe miſſe of their purpoſes, and ſo loſe their labour, but he that traueleth as hee ought, for the underſtanding of Gods will and his heavenly Myſteries, may be well aſſured at the entrance,

entrance, that hee shall not faile to speede well in the end. No point can be made more manifest by any prooffe, than this is by the euident testimony of Christ, saying, *Whosoener asketh, receiveth: and he that seeketh, findeth: and to him, that knocketh, it shall be opened.* Which David knew long before, and claymed the benefit of, at the hand of the Lord, in this manner: *With my whole heart haue I sought thee, let mee not wander from thy Commandements.* Reade *Esay 55.2.3.* *Psal. 119.98.99.*

First, the truth of God being so farre ingaged in the matter, could not but sustaine some blemish, if man performing his duty should not finde God to performe his promise. And how would that be verified which he publisheth so solemnely by his Prophets: *I haue not spoken in secret, nor in a place of darkenesse in the earth: I said not in vaine to the seede of Iacob, Seeke ye me: I the Lord doe speake righteousness, and declare righteous things.* *Reason 1.*

Gods readines to giue grace preuenteth mens desires, and maketh them so forward to seeke it, and therefore likewise will prosper their indeuors, that they shall vndoubtedly get it. That holdeth firme in euery holy ordinance, which the Psalmist acknowledgeth concerning that one of prayer. *Lord (saith he) thou hearest the desire of the poore, thou preparest their heart, thou bendest thine eare vnto them.* *Esay 45.19.*

Thirdly, it is pleasing to him to haue vtterance for his graces, to finde men ready for them: euery faithfull heart rightly prepared, is to him as a fertile field husbandly tilled, to which hee will neuer thinke it too much to allow seede enough. *2.*

Instruction to them that are vpright in their wayes to performe all good seruices with hope of blessing: to pray in hope, to fast in hope, to heare in hope, to reade in hope, to meditate in hope, to examine themselues in hope, to enioy the Sacraments in hope: So shall that which seemeth hard, be found to be easie, and that which is laborious, shall be felt to be lightesome: all feare of danger, and disgrace, all difficulties and tediousnes will be removed; as may be obserued in *3.*

husbandmen, who patiently endure the toyles, the charges, and bitterness of seede-time, expecting the gaine and benefit of harvest.

Conuiction of them which are euer learning, & yet neuer come to the knowledge of the truth, that they haue bin sayling in some of these duties, by performing whereof men are capable of this promise. Though they haue heard the word, yet they haue not hearkned to it with attention: or else they haue been slacke, & not constant in those exercises: or peradventure their heart was not much affected with the loue and desire of vnderstanding: and doubtlesse, they did not so faithfully as they ought seeke grace at Gods hand, and call for his assistance, and blessing. And these be the causes why among so many hearers, there are so few fruitfull hearers: And why, the greater number of those that liue in the time and places where the Gospell is soundly preached, are yet as ignorant, as impious, as little acquainted with the power of godlines, as if they had beene borne in the darke midnight of popery, or dwelt in the barbarous country of the Tartars.

Verse 6. *For the Lord giveth wisdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*

**T**Hese words are added for a double vse, as well to be a confirmation of a promise, as an amplification of that excellent gift which is promised, and they aptly serue for both. For (touching the former) how should they which in due manner seeke wisdom, misse of it, seeing that he which encourageth them to labour for it, with assurance of obtaining it, is hee who hath the disposing of it, and that is *Iehouah* himselfe, the eternall, vnchangeable, and all-sufficient, who can easily worke it with a word, as the manner described importeth; *Out of his mouth cometh understanding*, that is, by his blessing; that being a borrowed speech, ascribed to God, which properly belongeth to men, who commonly make their promises, & appoyntments by the words of their mouthes: in like manner (though the Lord, being a Spi-  
rit,



rit, hath no vse of mouth, or other corporall members, and being omnipotent, his will carrieth power enough, without the helpe of words) yet for our weake capacity, that which he effectually worketh is imputed to the force of his words.

*Matth. 4. 4. Man shall not live by bread onely, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Lament. 3. 38. Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not euill and good? Ionah 2. 10. The Lord spake vnto the fish, and it cast vp Ionah vpon the dry land.* And touching the latter, namely, the amplification, whosoever shall heede fully attend to the purpose of the Holy Ghost, may evidently perceiue that Wisedome is in this verse, and the two next, extolled, and set forth by the cause, the glorious and bountifull Author thereof: and in the rest that follow is commended by the effects, the singular and admirable fruits of it. The Author we see, is the Lord *Iehonah*, the onely originall, perfect, absolute, and eternall being, and that out of his most gracious mouth it proceedeth.

God himselfe is the onely effectuell teacher of his people. Ministers, though neuer so learned, and faithfull, though they were Prophets, as powerful, as *Esay*, and *Ieremy*, though they were Apostles, as profitable as *Paul*, and *Peter*, can yet no more of themselues cause their hearers to vnderstand, belecue, and obey, than the sower is able to make his seede to grow, or the Gardiner to infuse sappe into the plant which he setteth, whereby it may roote, spring, budde, blossome, and fructifie. *The weapons of their warrefare indeede are not carnall, but mighty, but through God, as the Apostle acknowledgeth: else had it beene in their power, to cast downe holdes, to cast downe imaginations, and high things that are exalted against the knowledge of God? Could they haue brought into captivity euery thought to the obedience of Christ? It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Euery man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh vnto Christ. Reade Deuter. 29. 4. Ierem. 31. 33. Malac. 1. 25. Actes 16. 14.*

Doctrines.

1 Cor. 10. 4. 5.

John 6. 45.

First, Wisedome, Knowledge, and Grace are the best, and most

Reason 1.

most perfect gifts which are bestowed vpon any in this life: and therefore they are consequently from aboue, and come downe from the Father of Lights, *Iames 1.17.*

2. Secondly, no man is effectually taught before his heart be informed: and who can informe the heart but hee that knoweth it? and who doth know it but hee that made it?

3. Thirdly, he that is taught true wisdom is made to vnderstand the minde of God, which none can reueale, but his owne Spirit: *For what man knoweth the things of a man, saue the spirit of a man which is in him? Euen so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God.*

*1 Corin. 2. 11.*

*Use*

Instruction, neyther to trust to thine owne quicke capacity, whereby thou art apt to conceiue, and learne, nor yet to the eloquence of thy Ministers tongue, whereby hee is able to teach, and perswade, but to the Lord alone, to whom it belongeth both to guide his lippes, and to instruct thy soule.

2.

Instruction to them who are indued with knowledge, and wisdom aboue others, that they be thankfull and modest, and not proud and insolent: *For what hast thou that thou hast not receiued? And if thou hast receiued it, why dost thou glorie as though thou hadst not receiued it.*

3.

Consolation to them whom God hath made the proficient Scholers of his ministry, and spirit, they may vndoubtedly conclude of his loue, by so infallible a testimony, and pledge thereof. Yea all that truely desire and apply themselves to be enriched with wisdom, and reioyce at the knowledge of God in his people, haue cause to take comfort in this that the Lord reserveth the distribution of grace to himselfe: for now wee may certainly know that hee will be knowne: what naturall defects, what corruption of flesh and bloud, what Antichrist, what tyrant, what Deuill, and Sathanas can restraine him from being good, gracious, and bountifull in the best manner vnto his owne?

*Verse 7. He hath laid vp true substance for the righteous: he is a shield to them that walke vprightly.*

*Verse*

Verse 8. *That they may keepe the paths of equitie : and hee preserveth the way of his Saints.*

**H**Auing had occasion to speake of Gods beneficence, in bestowing that diuine and celestiall gift of wisdom, hee proceedeth to inlarge his praises, for the effects of his goodnes in other cases :

Where may be noted { 1 The speciall fauours which hee sheweth.  
2 To what manner of persons they belong.

The fauours heere mentioned are, Prouision and Protection. The former whereof is set forth by a similitude from prouident fathers, who take care for their children, and not onely maintaine them, with foode, and other necessities while they are young, but yearely get and lay vp to make them a stocke, when they come to age : So, and better dealeth the Lord for his sonnes and daughters : for whereas men gather corruptible goods for theirs, which many times come to nothing, and they haue no vse of them, *hee hideth that which is a being*, (as the word signifieth) for his : they shall be sure to inioy the benefit of it : the treasures of grace, ioy, and glory, are safely reserued for them. The latter is of two sorts, the one corporall, concerning the outward man, as safety from bodily enemies, and externall dangers, which is also declared by a borrowed speech, hee being called a *Shield* that will intercept all noysome strokes, and practises, that none of them shall light vpon his people to hurt them, though for their triall, humility, and other profitable vses, they may be afflicted by them. The other is spirituall, concerning the inward man, as safety from sinne and Sathan, and Apostasie, that notwithstanding by these enemies of the soule, they are in perill either to be mis-led through craft, or to be thrust out of the right way through violence, yet *they shall keepe the paths of equitie*, they shall perseuere and proceede in their vertuous courses : and why ? For *he preserveth their way*. He doth, as it were, guard, and establish them.

in



in their well-doing by his grace, from the force and power of their owne corruptions, and the Diuels temptations, and wicked mens euill counsells, and the worlds allurements: yea hee directeth, and by his prouidence prospereth their purposes, words, actions, and the whole course of their liues. Now hee describeth those for whom this prouision is made, and to whom this protection pertaineth diuersly; first, from their truth and sincerity, calling them *righteous*: secondly, from their holy conuersation, that *they walke vprightly*: thirdly, from their happy estate, that they are the Saints of the Lord: the deriuation of the Hebrew word importeth such as to whom God sheweth mercy, and so are made also godly and mercifull.

*Doctr. 1.* *Hee layeth vp, &c.] Faithfull men haue a better estate than the world knoweth of.*

Their wealth consisteth not in money, nor goods, neither are they to be valewed according to their lands or reuenues, but according to that grace which they haue gathered, and congested in their hearts, and that happines which is treasured vp for them in the heauens. As it is written, *The things which eye hath not scene, neyther eare hath heard, neyther came into mans heart, are which God hath prepared for them that loue him.* For now are wee the children of God, but yet it doth not appeare what wee shall be: and wee know that when hee shall appeare, we shall be like him. Because wee are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ which is our life shall appeare, then shall we also appeare with him in glory.

1 Cor. 2.9.

1 Iohn 3.2.

Colos. 3.3.4.

*Reasons.*

First, this prouision is not made by earthly parents, or mortall friends, whose care for storing vp of earthly riches may be apprehended of mortall men: but it is our heavenly Father that would haue vs inherite heavenly possessions, whose goodnes is infinite, and power omnipotent, and plenty inuisible.

2.

Secondly, that which he prepareth is not glittering vanity, which satisfieth foolish mens fancies, by abusing their senses, as doth the glasse of terrestriall commodities, but a solide substance, whereof the comfort, vse, and inioyment will

Prover. 8.21.

will be perpetually substantiall. It cannot be said of this, *All* Esay 40. 6.  
*flesh is grasse, and all the grace thereof is as the flowre of the field,*  
*the grasse withereth, and the flowre fadeth.* It can not be said to  
 them that seek for this: *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which* Prover. 23. 5.  
*is nothing?*

Thirdly, as Gods mercy and providence vndertaketh  
 this businesse, to provide vs of that which is pretious, and  
 permanent, so it is as safely kept, as graciously appoynted  
 for vs: he hath laid it in a sure place, as men hide, and looke  
 vp their mony, and Jewells from theeves and pilferers: and  
 where it is kept, there is no perill, either of casualty whereby  
 it may be lost, or else of corruption, whereby it may be mar-  
 red.

Fourthly, whosoever is a possessor of grace, and an heire  
 of glory, is neuer destitute of needfull provision for this  
 present life. The Lord hath hidden-foode ready for them  
 against all wants: and hidden-comforts against all sorrowes;  
 and hidden-credit against all reproaches. Though their e-  
 nemies strive to affamish them with penury, and to vex  
 them with troubles, and to disgrace them with all manner of  
 contumelies, yet their bodies and families are sustained, their  
 hearts refreshed, and their names had in estimation: *For the*  
*Lord God is their Sunne & Shield: the Lord wil give grace and*  
*glorie, and no good thing will hee with-holde from them that*  
*walke uprightly.*

Instruction, not to conforme our iudgements to the o-  
 pinion of the world, as to thinke them forlorne whose in-  
 tegrity causeth men to neglect them, yea to maligne them,  
 yea to molest them, yea peradventure also to persecute and  
 oppresse them. Be so farre from their minde who condemne  
 the state of such to be vnfortunate, and miserable; as that  
 thou wilt rather adioyne thy selfe to their company, and be  
 like to those who are so hardly thought of.

Consolation for them that be true Israelites, & not guilefull  
 hypocrites) though neuer so meane in degree, though neuer  
 so poore in estate: others may haue honour, wealth, pleasure,  
 which are shadowes, not substance: things that seeme to be  
 rather

rather than that are : but these, these are substantiall men indeede, according to Gods owne seizment. Let not such therefore be afraid of pouerty, nor dread the direption and spoile of their goods, if they should be put to that triall for their constant fidelity to the Lord, & his truth : yea let them reioyce in it, with thankfulnessse, *Knowing that they haue in heauen, a better, and an induring substance.*

Hebr. 10. 34.

Doctr. 2.

*He is a shield, &c.]* Godly men liue in greatest safety.

Enemies they shall haue, both many, and mighty, by whom they may looke to be fiercely assaulted (and for that cause the Lord is called their *shield*) but no multitudes, nor power can preuaile against them, because their shield both *couereth* them, and *compasseth* them round about, and is impenetrable : neither can the sword, or darte, or shot, possibly strikethem, vntill it pierce him : they shall not be wounded before their buckler be broken, or smitten through. And albeit they seeme often to be ouerthrowne with the wrongs which they suffer, as some are stript of their possessions, others are imprisoned, others are banished, others are tormented, others are killed, &c. yet this commeth not to passe through the force of their aduersaries might, but by the will of God ; neither doth hee will it to satisfie their foes, but to increase their felicity, as is said ; *Who is it that shall harme you, if yee follow that which is good ? Notwithstanding blessed are ye, if ye suffer for righteousness sake.* Read Deut. 33. 29. Iob 5. 21. Psal. 3. 5. 6. and 18. 1. &c. and 91. 1. 2. &c. Prover. 30. 5. Zach. 2. 5.

Psal. 5. 11. 12.

1 Pet. 3. 13. 14.

Reason 1.

First, hee calleth them to his worke, with promise of defence, and therefore it standeth with his truth and iustice to protect them.

2.

Secondly, all the iniuries which are offered to them, and all the malice which is borne vnto them, are occasioned by that seruice which they performe to him : for this cause is the enemy so violent against them ; and will he suffer any to be hurt for their loue and loyalty ?

3.

Thirdly, the neare bonds and coniunction betweene him and his people may well assure vs of his care to defend vs :  
they



they are his friends, they are his subiects, they are his servants, his children, his Spouse, yea, the members of his owne body, according to the saying, *Hee that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of his eye.* See this point handled Chap. 9. vers. 1. Doct. 3. and Chap. 10. vers. 9.

Zach. 2. 8.

*Hee keepeth, &c.]* God watcheth as much over his people to defend them from sinne as from any bodily danger. True it is that he doth not fence them from the practise of all faults, that they should transgresse none of his Commandements; neyther doth he worke in them such a complete obedience that they should exactly performe every dutie: for that were to make them perfect before the time of perfection; but hee freeth them from the dominion of all euill, and inclineth their hearts both to desire and endeavour to be entire in all goodnesse, and when they doe ought which is forbidden, or faile of that which is commanded, he rescueth them from the power and guiltinesse of their sinnes by repentance, and then they are safe and in as good estate, as if they had neuer offended. This did *Paul* meane, when hee brake out of an exclamation into a thanksgiving, saying; *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer me from the body of this death? I thanke God through Iesus Christ our Lord.* And of this protection hee glorieth when hee saith, *Who shall seperate vs from the loue of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, &c? In all these things wee are more than conquerours through him that loueth vs.* And to this belongeth that of the Prophet, *Thine eares shall heare a word behinde thee saying; This is the way, walke yee in it, when thou turnest to the right hand, and when thou turnest to the left.* Reade 1 Sam. 2. 9. Luke 1. 79. Psal. 25. 9. and 27. 10. 11. and 73. 23. 24.

Doctr. 3.

Rom. 7. 24. 25.

Isay 30. 21.

First, hee proposeth that end whensoever hee succoureth any of his, that they should the more faithfully obey him, and flye from sinne, as our Text witnesseth, when it saith; *He is a shield to them that walke uprightly, that they may keepe the pathes of iudgement.* And *Zachary*, *John the Baptists* Father, celebrateth his meruailous mercy, in graunting vnto vs, that

Reason I.

wee

*Luke 1.74.*

*Wee being deliuered out of the hands of our enemies, should serue him without feare all the dayes of our life, in holinesse and righteousnesse before him.*

2.

Secondly, we stand in greatest need of his helpe for our soules and conuersations. Our ghostly enepies are by farre the most perillous, for malice, fiercenesse, power, and subtiltie: Wee are of our selues in nothing more silly, impotent, and euery way insufficient, than in resisting the Diuell, and our owne outrageous corruptions; then in ordering our harts aright, and directing our steps in the commandements of God: and no wound is so dangerous, as that of the Conscience; no dammage is so great, as the losse of innocencie and righteousnesse; no wandering is so pernicious, as to stray from the way of life, and to turne into the by-patches that leade to destruction. All corporall tortures, and other temporall miseries are farre inferiour to these hellish and perpetuall mischiefes, for the auoyding whereof many of Gods deare Children haue endured as much and as exquisite bodily torment as mans wit could inuent, or his hand was able to inflict vpon them.

*Vse. 1.*

Admonition to conclude no further of Gods loue and mercy, from your outward preservation, then you may finde the fruits of his fauour in guiding you by his word, and giuing victory ouer your sinnes, by his Spirit. Otherwise, while you walke in wicked wayes, which of the worst might not haue matched you in obtrayning of deliuerances? You haue escaped when many miscarried: so did *Cham* when all the world was drowned; and yet not better beloved of the Lord than innumerable that perished. You haue had the better, and your enemies were soyled: might not *Saul* haue said so much and *Achab*, and diuers other Idolaters, who yet at last were confounded, as you must needes be, in earth, or hell, if your iniquities be not conquered? for God in the end by his iudgement will turne his hand against your bodies, when he is continually prouoked by the sinnes of your soules.

2.

Instruction, that seeing the Lord is as vigilant for the safeguard

guard and welfare of the inward man, as of the outward, and taketh as great charge of our *wayes*, to continue a spirituall life, as of our breath, to prolong a naturall life, we also should be most heedfull to looke to that for which (on our behalfe) hee is most watchfull.

Encouragement to seeke his helpe when ought is amisse in our soules or behauiour. Hee hath vouchsafed to vnder-take the redresse thereof, and will giue credit to our complaints, because hee *keeping our wayes*, is not ignorant that wee haue reason to craue his aide. And if we walke vprightly and be his *Saints*, the experience of his prouidence shielding vs from the harmes that men would doe vnto vs, may easily confirme vs in assurance, that hee will no lesse protect vs from all other enormities. For so concludeth the Apostle; *The Lord assisted mee, and I was deliuered out of the mouth of the Lion, and hee will deliuer me from euery euill worke, and will preserue me vnto his heavenly Kingdome.* 2 Tim. 4. 17. 18.

And if he keepe *the wayes of his chosen Saints*, as faithfully hee doth, how can hee suffer any stumbling-blockes to lye where they should passe, against which a faithfull man may dash, and fall totally from the Faith? Where then were that stabilitie wherewith hee promisseth to establish his people, when hee saith; *I will giue them one heart, and one way, that they may feare mee for euer, for the wealth of them and of their children after them, and I will make an euerlasting conenant with them, that I will neuer turne away from them, to doe them good, but I will put my feare in their hearts, that they shall not depart from mee.* So much of the cause of Wisedome, now follow the effects. Jerem. 32. 39. 40.

**Verse 9.** *Then shalt thou vnderstand righteousnesse, and iudgement, and equitie, and euery good path.*

**T**HE effect of wisedome which he here beginneth to in-treate of, is the vigour and efficacie of it, whereby they are induced and made able to doe that which is good, as these words declare, and become circumspect and cautiellous to



to shunne that which is euill, as will appeare in the sequels of that which followeth. *Then*, when thou hast applyed thine cares and heart to wisedome, when thou hast called for vnderstanding, when thou hast diligently sought for it, and found it, the Lord bestowing it vpon thee, then *shall* thou vnderstand, both know, and iudiciously exercise *Iustice*, that which is lawfull and right; and *iudgement*, prudence, and good discretion; and *equitie*, faithfull and plaine dealing; and *euery good path*, all good courses of righteousnesse and Religion. And that he meaneth a practicall knowledge and not at intellectuall onely, it may be seene by conference with other places, as *Chap. 8. vers. 20. I cause to walke in the way of righteousnesse, and in the midst of the pathes of iudgement.* And in the first *Chap. Ver. 3. To receiue instruction, to doe wisely by Iustice, and Iudgement, and Equitie.* See more there.

Verse 10. *When wisedome entereth into thy heart, and Knowledge delighteth thy soule.*

Verse 11. *Then shall Counsell preserue thee, and Vnderstanding shall keepe thee.*

Verse 12. *And deliuer thee from the euill way.*

**H**Auing in few words, but very significant, expressed the force of Wisedome, in conducting and enabling men to that which is good, hee is now to declare the vertues of it, for conseruation against that which is euill: it is a borrowed manner of speech or figure, which we call *Prosopopeia*, compared to a Watch or Guard, such as Princes and Great-men are wont to haue about them for the safety of their persons: and therefore it is semblably said in the eleauenth verse (contayning the summe of all) that *Counsell shall preserue them, and Vnderstanding shall keepe them*, their soules shall be as safe by the power thereof, as the bodies of those which haue a band of armed men to waite vpon them. Hercunto in the tenth Verse, hee maketh a passage, by teaching him that would receiue defence from wisedome, how he must be prepared for it: and afterwards in the twelfth, and those that follow

follow, hee specieth the principall hurtfull things from which he shall be protected. In the preparation are two things required: first, that *Wisedome* enter not into the head onely, so as it may be vnderstood or may be discoursed of, but *into the heart*, to season the conscience, and that it be singularly beloued, which will produce this effect, that knowledge shall *delight the soule*, be pleasant vnto it, as beautifull sights are to the eyes. according to the proper signification of the word, or as meate and drinke are to the hungry and thirsty, or any thing which wee relish well, in which sence the word is also sometimes vsed, as *Prou. 9. 17. Hid bread is pleasant, &c.*

The hurtfull things from which *Wisedome* will defend a man, are of two sorts: some are reall or actuall, as the *euill way*, wicked behauiour, or sinfull attempts, and exorbitant courses: some are personall, as the meanes and causes of the former, and these are mentioned in the latter straine of the twelfth Verse, and more fully in those that next ensue it.

Doctr.

The fruit and vertue of *Wisedome* for preservation, belongeth to them that imbrace it with good affection.

All they, and none besides, are sure to enioy the right vse and benefit of their knowledge, and of the holy Scriptures which they know, that haue loue mixed with their vnderstanding: others will be puffed vp with pride, and neyther be edified nor fenced. Wee are taught this, almost in the first Verse of the first *Psalm*, where the blessed man, that neyther walketh in the counsell of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seate of the scornors, is hee whose delight is in the Law of the Lord. And to the same cause is the fruitfulness of a good mans lips, and the constant vprightnesse of his life ascribed in another *Psalm* in this manner; The mouth of the righteous will speake of wisedome, and his tongue will take of iudgement: for the Law of God is in his heart, and his steps shall not slide. Salomon for this purpose annexeth a lightsome promise to a wholesome exhortation, saying; Binde thy Fathers commandement alwayes vpon thy heart, &c. It shall lead thee when thou walkest; it shall watch for thee when thou sleepest;

Psalm. 1. 1. 2.

Psalm. 37. 30. 31.

Prou. 6. 21. 22.

*sleepest; and when thou wakest, it shall talke with thee.*

*Reason 1.*

First, this loue and holy delight, according to the measure thereof, repelleth and chaseth away all noysome and corrupt delights, whereby the hearts of so many are poysoned, and their wayes peruerted..

2.

Secondly, loue is armed and guarded with the strength of all other affections; it is attended on with Hope, Ioy, Feare, Hatred, &c. Euery one of these doth fight for that which it doth affect, and warre against all that it doth maligne.

3.

Thirdly, it hath power in it selfe to confirme and make him constant that is indued therewith, both against intisements and discouragements, according to that in the Canticles. *Loue is strong as Death, Ielousie is cruell as the Grane: the coales thereof are fiery coales and a vehement flame: much water cannot quench Loue, neyther can the floods drowne it: If a man should giue all the substance of his house to buy Loue, they would greatly contemne it, Cant. 8. 6. 7.*

4.

Fourthly, the Lord searching the heart, and finding the delight and loue of his word therein, doth strengthen the soules of such men with the might of his Spirit, and poureth vpon them his blessings of grace, whereas most of them which are taught more then they regard to learne, to loue, and practise, haue his curse vpon their hearts, because *They receiued not the loue of the truth, and so are giuen vp to strong delusions, that they may beleene and giue heed to lies, or else to inordinate affections, that they might be subiect and obedient to lusts.*

*2 Thes. 2. 11.*

*Use 1.*

Instruction, according to the example of the Prophets and other holy men, to be petitioners to the Lord to worke in our soules this louely grace of Loue, and spirituall delight in his word; to incline our hearts to his testimonies, that each of vs may truely say as they did, *O how loue I thy Law? Thy Commandements are sweeter to mee than hony, or the hony-combe: they are dearer to mee than thousands of Gold and Silver, &c.* So shall that which is irkesome to all the wicked, be made pleasant to vs, and pleasure, profit, honour and safetie shall all be vnited together,

*Psal. 119.*

*Psal. 97. 103.*

Conuiction



Conuiction of most, that haue no delight at all in the Counsels of God, because they flye from no sin in loue, and conscience of them: and of the best, that they haue too little delight therein, because they doe not auoid euill so much as they ought. If we had more ioy in God, and his voyce, wee should be lesse enamoured with the world, and the vanities thereof: wee would not be possessed with the lusts of the Flesh, the lusts of the Eyes, and the pride of Life.

Reproofe and terrour for them that loath the wisdom of God, and loue it not; to whom it is a vexation and torment, rather then a refreshing and comfort: from what sinne and villanie haue they protection? From what mischief and misery haue they immunitie? If Sathan will haue them to steale, they must be thecues: If hee would haue them breake wedlocke, they must be adulterers: If hee will haue them kill, they must be murtherers: whatsoever hee will haue them to doe, they must attempt it, and then are they subiect to all the plagues and perils which ensue vpon such practises. Hence it is that the world swarmeth vvith all sorts of hurtfull people, and euill doers, as Idolatrous Papists, blasphemous Swearers, licentious Sabbath-breakers, trayterous Conspirators, violent Oppressors, ruffianly Swaggers, swinish Drunkards, beastly Buggerers, insatiable Cormorants, impudent Lyers, &c. Wisdom entreth into few mens hearts, and Knowledge delighteth not the soules of many. And by this wee may discerne of the dangerous Hypocrites, who, though they make a Profession of Pietie and Religion, liue yet in perpetuall perill of breaking out into grosse offences, for that they loue rather to be praised for Religion, than faithfully to apply themselves to procure prayse vnto it. They heare and pray, and doe the seruices of God for fashion, or for feare, for mens fauour, and good liking, and other carnall respects, best knowne to themselves, and doe nothing with any spirituall alacritie, ioy, and gladnesse, or desire of them. And therefore when the Diuell, whom they serue, seeth Fornications, Adulteries,

or other shamefull crimes to be more aduantageous for him than the former imployments, they shall be tasked therewith, and vvhhen the LORD vvvith vvhom they dissemble, seeth it a fit season to discover them, their visards shall be plucked off, that the world may finde out their falsehood.

Verse 12. *And from the man that speaketh peruerse things.*

S O L O M O N hath shewed the actuall euill, the wicked course of life, from which the louers of wisdom shall be shielded: and now hee proceedeth to promise them safetie also from the meanes thereof, such pestilent persons as vse to intice and corrupt others,

And those are: { 1 Dissolute Men.  
2 Whorish Women.

Both which hee describeth at large, and first, the Men: and them by sundry effects, whereof each one, as it were by steps, surmounteth another: the first is their speech, that *they speake peruerse things*, tending to the dishonour of God, and the peruerting of men, as the roote and originall of the word importeth.

Doctr.

That is the proper marke of a sinfull man to accustome his lips to talke lewdly.

Scarse any vice in all this Booke, is oftner reprobued than the abuse of the tongue: and we remember not that vngracious men are any way more disgraced than by that, as when it is said, *A man of Beliall, and the wicked man*

Prov. 6. 12. *walketh with a froward mouth. The mouth of a foole is a pre-*  
Pro. 10. 14. 32 *sent destruction. The mouth of the wicked speaketh froward*  
*things.* Reade Chap. 16. 30. Rom. 13. 14. Eccles. 10. 12. 13.  
Mat. 12. 37.

Reason 1.

First, the heart is discovered by the course and current of the words, to be good or bad: if the soule be sanctified, the lips will be well seasoned, if they be disordered, so are also

also the affections. *O generations of vipers, saith the Lord, Mal. 12. 34. 35. how can yee speake good things when yee are euill? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and an euill man out of the euill treasure of his heart bringeth forth euill things.*

Secondly, in the godly, the mouth, of all the members, most fighteth against Sathan, and Sathan abuseth the mouth of the wicked for the most part, more than any other member: hee vseth it for a Fowling-peece to kill the soules of men, and for his artillery, and great ordnance to discharge it against the truth and glory of God: it is truely said by S. James, that the tongue setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. 2.

Instruction how to iudge of our selues, and others, euen by the sanctitie, or prophanenesse of the speech: whether that forcible member the Tongue, which God made for the chiefe, and vniuersall instrument of his glory, and the welfare of his people, be gracious or vicious, wholesome or harmefull, fruitfull or idle. They that are good, by it will doe most good, and they that are lewd, thereby in speciall manner doe vent their lewdnesse. See Chap. 10. 14. Use I.

Verse 13. *And from them that leave the paths of righteousness, to walke in the paths of darkenesse.*

**T**He second effect of wicked men, is their behaviour and deeds, (for euill speaking is euer accompanied with euill doing) and those are set forth by an opposition, or comparison of contraries, whereby their course of life is made more odious, and therefore it is said that they *forsake the paths of righteousness*, which are also the paths of light; *to walke in the paths of darkenesse*, which are the wayes of ignorance, and iniquity, as if hee should haue said; They turne from the right way of knowledge, and obedience which leadeth to Saluation, and travell in the by-wayes of sinne toward destruction; and their fault heerein is so much the sowler, in that



they goe not astray by meere error, or infirmity of their nature, as if they could not learne, or neuer were directed to a better way, but against their knowledge, and contrary to the light, they wilfully shunne that good course which is approoued of God, and conforme themselves to the will of Sathan, and practise that which they would neuer haue to be examined by the rule of the Word; for the shine thereof would discover the hidcousnesse of it, and make it appeare to be odious and loathsome.

*Doctrin.*

*That leaue the paths, &c.]* The more wilfully men sinne, the greater offenders they are.

It is not safe to misse of the right way to Saluation; but very dangerous to refuse, and forsake it: it is euill to fall, or slippe into euill, but farre worse to leape into the same, or voluntarily to cast ones selfe into it.

*John 3. 19. 20.*

*This is condemnation, that Light is come into the world, and men loue darkenesse rather than light, because their deedes were euill. For euery man that euill doth, hateth the light, neyther cometh to the light, lest his deedes should be reproofed, Reade Chap. 30. 10. 11. Ierem. 6. 16. 17. Luke 19. 14. 27. 2 Pet. 2. 15. See Chap. 1. verse 24.*

*Verse 14. Which reioyce in doing euill, and delight in wicked forwardnesse.*

**T**He third property and effect of these wicked men is the disorder of their affections, whereby they aggravate, and much increaseth the naughtines of their words and actions. For they not onely doe euill, but *reioyce therein*, they come to it with desire, they practise it with pleasure, and afterwards are glad of their hellish exploits, yea they exalt, as the other word signifieth, they expresse that delight which they haue taken in satisfying their lusts, either by gesture, or countenance, or vaunting, or by some meanes, or other, and many of them glory most of that whereof they ought to be most ashamed, as in *wicked forwardnesse*, the word is *peruersenesse*

perueneſſe of euill, ſinnefull headineſſe in their licentious attempts whatſoeuer.

They are of all others the moſt grieuous malefactours, *Doctrine.* to whom ſinne is delightfull.

All good men are too childiſh, and receiue full often this hurtfull poyſon into their mouthes, but they ſoone diſtaſte it, and ſo auoyde it by repentance: but woe to them that re- liſh iniquity, that ſwallow it, and entertaine it into their ſto- macks: they ſhall finde in time, vnleſſe they timely preuent it, what desperate, and intollerable gripings it will worke in their bowels. For, ſo much as that is liked, all goodnes is loath- ed, in what meaſure any man is a friend vnto ſinne, in the ſame he is an enemy to grace. Reade *Pſal. 52. 1. 3. 4. Iob 20. 12. 13. 14. Prover. 4. 17. See Chap. I. verſe 22. Doctr. 3. &c. Chap. 10. verſe 23.*

Verſe 15. *Whoſe wayes are peruerſe, and they are obſtinate in their paths.*

**T**He laſt effect and property of theſe ſinnefull miſcreants, is their desperate incorrigiblenes: that albeit their waies be peruerſe, and all their courſe and carriage be lewd, and dampable, yet they are refractary in them, and reſolued neuer to mend, but grow worſe, like reſty jades that are ſtill going backwards, when they ſhould proceed in a journey. Neyther will they hearken to him that ſhall teach them by precepts, nor yet be willing to follow him that ſhall leade them by example, but are euery way auerſe, and froward, that their Miniſter, or beſt friends can haue no hope, or heart to deale any further with them, but may leaue them with a ſigh, as men incurable: as the Phyſition doth him that hath the pangs of death vpon him, or the Surgeon ſuch a one as is thruſt through the heart. They are the ſame whom in the former Chapter be called ſcorners; which would none of Wiſedomes counſell, but deſpiſed her corre- ction, &c.

Verle 16. *It shall deliuer thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.*

**N**OW followeth the second sort of perillous persons, from which Wisedome will defend the men that loue her, she will deliuer them from the euil woman, from the adulteresse, and all her inticements, with the fruit, and end thereof.

1 Qualities.

And here is she described by her

2 Effects.

Her Qualities are first, that shee is a *strange woman*, one with whom thou oughrest to haue nothing to doe: For *strange* standeth in opposition to a mans lawfull Wife, all others in that sense are strangers; so other fire than that which God sent downe from heauen vpon the Altar, and was there continually nourished, was called *Strange fire*: then shee is said to be a *stranger*; to be reputed as a forreiner, that hath alienated her selfe from God, and his people, by her filthy conuersation. As therefore the *Israelites* might not marry with women that were Aliens, as being the daughters of strange Gods, no more ought a member of *Christ* to haue company with an harlot, as being, as it were, of another nation, not sanctified to the Lord, yea being distant from him by birth, as farre as the earth is from heauen.

1 Her lewd and sinfull behauiour.

Here effects are

2 The woe and misery whereunto shee bringeth her companions.

Some part of her misbehaviour is mentioned in this verse, as her smoothe and flattering speech, whereby she laboureth to allure vnmarried and heedelesse persons, and them with a bait to bring into her net.

Doctrine.

The loue and vertue of Gods word, is the onely sound remedy against the sinne of whoredome.

Wisdomes doth not onely command, as making claime to her owne right, but likewise giueth counsell, respecting our safety from the contagion of this sinne, when she saith,

My



*My sonne giue mee thy heart, and let thine eyes delight in my wayes, as appeareth by her reason: For a Whore is a deepe ditch, and a strange woman as a narrow pit. And heereunto agreeth that other saying; The commandement is a Lanterne, and instruction a light to keepe thee from the wicked woman, and from the flattery of the tongue of the strange woman, Read Cha. 5. 1. 2. and 7. 4. 5.*

Prov. 23. 26. 27.

Prov. 6. 13. 24.

First, the word worketh knowledge, as the Sunne giueth light: it illuminateth the vnderstanding in such manner, as the foulness of this filthy vice, together with the manifold mischiefs which it ingendreth, is openly discovered, as that it defileth both soule and body, blindfoldeth the minde, hardeneth the heart, wasteth the substance, staineth the name, corrupteth the seede, excludeth men out of heauen, and draweth them into perdition, &c. These considerations it exhibiteth, as Antidotes against the fact, and against the fallacious inducements to it: and so with prouident care of their owne welfare, fortifieth the hearts, eies and cares of religious people against the assaults and enchantments of harlots, and whoremasters, of whom they are in danger otherwise to be taken, and destroyed: For they haue a kinde of Sathanicall subtilty to dequie with faire speeches, and persuasions, according to our Text; and others which say, that the lippes of a strange woman droppe as an hony-combe, and her mouth is more soft than oyle, but the end of her is bitter as wormwood, and sharpe as a two-edged sword. For with her great craft she causeth men to yeelde vnto her, and with her flattering lippes she inticeth them. And they follow her strain wayes as an Oxe that goeth to the slaughter.

Reason 1.

Prov. 5. 3. 4.

Prov. 7. 21. 22.

If Amnon was carried away captiue of lust after his chaste Sister that tempted him not, how much more will the impudency of a whorish woman preuaile, that shall prouoke with words, countenance, gesture, and lasciuious behaviour?

2. Sam. 13.

Solomon himselfe had drunke of the venemous cup which wicked women had mixed, though not to poyson him with corporall adultery, yet with spirituall, and therefore spake not onely what hee knew, but what hee tasted, and felt, when

Eccles. 7. 28.

when hee saide, *I finde more bitter than death, the woman, whose heart is as nets and snares, and her hands, as bands: He that is good before God shall be deliuered from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her.*

2.

Secondly, the grace of the Spirit subdeweth lust, and the rage of libidinous passions, in the hearts of them that delight in the law of the Lord. The loue of purity and cleanness doth cause them to abhorre such loathsome obscenity, and detestable filthines: the feare of Gods wrath, and dishonour doth terrifie them from enterrayning such rebellious desires and motions, which otherwise would be as violent in them, through the corruption, and deprauation of nature, as they are in the rest of *Adams* children. No naturall faculties of the minde suffice to repressethem, neyther will the hauing of piety protect any man when he doth not vse it.

*Sampson* was very strong, and able to kill all that fought against him, though many in multitude, and yet farre vnable to vanquish his owne vncaste affections, and the forces of the harlot.

*Dauid* was both wise and valiant, and yet being at a time vnarmed of the delight and conscience of the word, hee was suddenly surprized, and how deeply hee was wounded by this horrible sinne of incontinency, the Christian world well knoweth.

3.

Thirdly, the Lord in his fauour doth looke to them in whose heart his law is, and causeth it to shield them from this beastly vice of impurity, whereas others by his iust iudgements are giuen vp to velle affections, and vncleanenes, even to defile their owne bodies betweene themselves.

Rom. 1. 24. 26.

Vse I.

Ierem. 23. 10.

Instruction to obserue the reason why fornicators, and other filthy persons doe swarme almost in all places, so many parishes, townes, and families being defiled, so that we may say with the Prophet, *The land is full of adulterers*, because there is great ignorance, and small vnderstanding: because that ignorance is much affected, and vnderstanding is little regarded: because many doe apprehend the letter and sense of the word, than participats of the effectuall power thereof:

of:

of: it is not from hence that there is so much preaching, and professing (as impious wretches blasphemously barke) but from want of vprightnes to imbrace and obey the counsells of God. Secondly, let euery man be perswaded to esteeme it a singular benefir, to be kept by grace from vnchastitie, and vnchaste companions, seeing it is heere promised as a blessing, and mercy to those which please God: and the contrary else-where, is threatned as a curse to such as offend him, when it is said, that *the mouth of strange women is as a deepe pit, hee with whom the Lord is angry shall fall therein.* Prov. 22. 14. And therefore be not wanting vnto thy selfe: reiect not the blessing, incurre not the curse. Forasmuch as the loue of sa- uing-knowledge is of so great force, and importance, thou canst neuer exceede too farre, nor passe measure in it, although vn sanctified vnderstanding doth pusse vp, and the desire of it for praise and vaine-glory be pernicious.

Conuiction of all them which are lustfull and lecherous, who haunt, or desire vnchaste, or dishonest company, whether of men or women (for one sexe may as well be a stranger as another) that Wisedome is out of request with them, either it neuer entred into their hearts, or else hath beene expelled thence by vnkinde vsage: for shee will make her louers strange to these wanton and filthy strangers, and prooue them to be their most mortall foes, although they would be reputed therein their faithfulest friends.

Verse 17. *Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.*

**H**ERE haue we declared vnto vs the effects of this strange woman, her disloyal and perfidious behaviour, both against her husband and the Lord. *Shee forsaketh her husband*, both in affection and action, though not perhaps in bodily presence, as *Potiphars* wife, and the harlot mentioned heereafter in the seauenth Chapter: neyther doe all, nor the most, but few of them, viterly refuse their husbands bed, notwithstanding shee liue, and lie with him, yet



yet shee is said to relinquish him, if shee keepe not her selfe to him onely, and hee inioy her wholly. Now to aggravate the hainousnesse of the offence, *Solomon* describeth the husband so wronged, by his office, and authority and giueth him the Title of *Guide*, adding a circumstance to make the fault appeare the fowler, that hee is *the guide of her youth*, euen hee whom shee first loued, to whom shee first gaue her heart, and hand, and whom God had appointed to her as an head, and gouernour, and euen when shee was young, and had most neede of direction. Then her sinne against God is set out in that shee hath broken her oath plighted in the contract, and at the marriage, and so is periured, and that against the Lord whose covenant this was, not onely for that he ordained marriage to be entered into by such bonds, and conditions, but because it was ratified, sanctified, and established by his speciall presence, and with speciall inuocation vpon his name.

*Dof. 1.*

They which set their liking vpon strangers doe alienate themselves from their yoke-fellowes.

*Prov. 5. 19. 20.*

As they incorporate themselves in mixture, or affection to the one, so they dismember themselves in the same nature, and measure from the other: so much as is deriued to forreiners, is detracted from their owne, vpon which ground our Author aduisech each husband to keepe his heart entire to his wife, and solace himselfe in her alone, as his *loving Hinde*, and *pleasant Roe*. Let her breasts (saith he) *satisfie thee at all times, and delight in her loue continually*. For why shouldst thou delight in a strange woman, or embrace the bosome of a stranger? By which opposition hee doth intimate, that so much kindenesse as the stranger findeth, the wife loseth, and that the way to keepe the Whore from hauing of all, is to let her haue none at all.

*Reason 1.*

First, such an injury will presse the conscience of the wrong-doer, with the heavy weight of guiltines; and guiltinesse will cause the parties wronged to be also feared: and feare with guiltinesse will ingender hatred towards them, and loue to their aduersaries.

Secondly,

Secondly, the heart once corrupted with filthinesse doth brooke nothing so much as that which is corrupt and filthy, all wholesome ordinances are distastfull to such fullsome stomakes. They choose rather to feede of *stollen bread*, though made, as it were of Akornes, and therefore onely fit for Swine, than to eat their owne bread, though the purest manchet: they preferre to drinke of *stollen waters*, though much more muddie and stincking, and that which runneth downe the foulest channels, before their owne, arising out of the clearest fountaine.

Thirdly, being become the seruants of Lust, they onely seeke to satisfie the same: and that doth the lawfull vse of the Marriage-bed kill, and all vnlawfull copulations and lasciuiousnesse kindle.

Fourthly, by the act of Adultery, the knot of Marriage is dissolued, and a new coniunction made betweene the parties so sinning, who are thereby become, as it were, *one body*, and *one flesh*, as the Apostle testifieth.

The due meditation whereof, with other arguments full of force and weight, may serue to kindle hatred in the hearts of men, against this hatefull, hurtfull, and hideous vice, replete with all kinde of mischiefs. It transformeth reasonable creatures into brutish shapes, and maketh men and women more vnkinde and vnnaturall than beasts: For how many of them doe vse to leaue their owne Mates, to which they are vnited, and so are become paires, or couples, to mixe themselues with others? Doe they not harme enough each to other, and euery one to him or her selfe, but they must also damnifie others, and euen those that are innocent, and ought to be also most intimate and dearest vnto them?

*Ioseph* reiected all the fauours which his Mistresse, no doubt, would haue amply bestowed vpon him: and exposed himselfe to all the mischiefs which she would certainly practise against him, rather than in this sort to be treacherous to his Maister, though of another Nation: and wilt thou shew such an indignitie to thine owne wife or husband, being

2.

3.

4.

1 Cor. 6. 16.

Use.

being thine owne flesh and body, and the one halfe of thy selfe?

Doctr. 2.

*Guide, &c]* The Wife is to be ordered by the gouernment and guidance of her Husband.

Hee ought to rule, and shee to be subiect: it is his dutie to giue direction, and hers to be tractable in obedience to him.

1 Tim. 2. 12.

The holy Ghost requireth her to *learne in silence, with all subiection, and not vsurpe authoritie over the man, &c.*

1 Cor. 11. 7.

Both the Law and Gospell teach her this: Nature doth teach it her: the example of the Churches subiection to Christ doth teach it her: the very hayre which is giuen her for the couering of her head, doth teach it her. Reade 1 Cor. 11. 3. and 14. 34. 35. Ephes. 5. 22. 23. 24. Col. 3. 18. Tit. 2. 5. 1 Pet. 3. 1.

Reason 1.

First, the Husband hath this prerogative and soueraignie by right of Creation, as being first shaped, and of whom, and for whom the woman was made.

2.  
Gen. 3. 16.

Secondly, it was confirmed to him by institution, the Lord decreeing, that *her desire should be subiect to him, and he should rule over her*: both for a penaltie of the fall of Heuab, and drawing of Adam into the same transgression also with her, as likewise in compassion of her weakenesse to appoint vnto her, and her Daughters, euen to that sexe, vnto the end of the world, such a necessary helpe and supportance.

Vse 1.

Instruction to Wiues, of what parentage, parts, place, or qualities soeuer: to respect Gods Ordinance, their Husbands place, and their owne neede, and submit themselves to their heads with due estimation, without contempt: with reuerent tearmes and behauiour, without despise: with readie obedience, without resistance, in all things which are lawfull. And let every Husband take notice as well of his dutie, as of his dignitie: that wisdome and faithfulness is required of him, as rule and authoritie is committed vnto him: his commands must tend no lesse to his wiues welfare then to the exercise of his owne iurisdiction.

Reprooffe



Reprofe both of stubborne wiues and foolish husbands, whereas the one will runne wilfully into all absurdities and mischiefs, and miseries, rather than beare any yoake, though neuer so easie, and the other eyther altogether relinquish the Superioritie and honour which belongeth vnto them, or else through want of moderation, humilitie, loue, knowledge, equitie, and conscience, abuse it.

Diuers fault herein diuersly; yea, wee may say truly, that the greater number of married men doe little regard this charge, and therefore are so preposterous, and vnprofitable in the whole gouernement of their families: Some are too remisse, and permit their wiues to be licentious; some are too rigorous, and debarre them of their lawfull libertie: some will allow them to be sinfull and vngodly, and speake nothing against it: some will allure them, and speake much for it: some will inforce and constrain them vnto it.

*Of her youth.]* It is fit for young parties to be bestowed in marriage with conuenient speede, as soone as they are of ripe yeeres.

Doctr. 3.

Wee see that the auncient manner of marrying was betimes, before that the flowre of age was withered, as Chap. 5.

ver. 18. *Reioyce with the wife of thy youth.* So saith Malachie, Mal. 2. 15.

*Let none trespass against the wife of his youth.*

First, that they may the more deeply settle their likings, in that time wherein they are more strong in their affections.

Reason 1.

Secondly, there is greater hope of a larger issue and progenie: for youth is the fittest time for the woman especially to propagate, in which is one chiefe end of marriage: and this was thought most fit by the Apostle, who refused the younger widowes, and would haue them to marry, and beare children, and gouerne the house.

1 Tim 5. 14.

Thirdly, it is a meanes to preuent fornication, and such like defilements, that they may come pure and cleane to the married estate, and so they are the more like to continue vertuous and honest.

3.

Reproofe.

Vsa

Reprooffe of two contrary extremities often practised against this point: one is of them that make too much haste in marrying Children vnder age, before any of the former reasons can take place: they cannot yet dispose of their affections, they haue neyther learned by practise nor precept to loue, in fuch manner as Matrimonic requireth: it is not yet time for them to marry; neyther haue they sufficient iudgement and vnderstanding to make a covenant in the presence of God, or to performe the duties that mutually are from one to the other. The other is of them that neglect that care which Parents should haue in providing matches for their children in due time, whereof much euill ensueth, as some corrupt themselues with incontinencie, before they be married, and can neuer be cured of it afterwards. Others take vpon them to be their owne chusers, and eyther marry or contract themselues without consent of parents: others beare a greater burthen through neede of marriage, and wayting the benefit of that ordinance, than they are well able to sustaine.

And here wee haue also occasion offered, but wee will not pursue it, to taxe those vnequall marches of old women past age, with young men fresh in strength and yeeres, which depriue the World and Church of sweet fruit, namely, legitimate children, and burthen the same many times with crabbed bastards: besides, the hot flames of lealousie, often which are commonly kindled with such Wiues, and the fastidious contempt that often ariseth in the hearts of those Husbands.

Doctr. 4.

*Forsake the covenant, &c.*] Vnfaithfulnesse to ones yoake-fellow is alwayes ioyned with impietie against God.

It is sinne against the Lord to wrong a friend, a seruant a bond-seruant, an enemy, any man, or any beast, but that is vnrighteousnesse, and this is vngodlinesse: thereby his Creature is misused, and hereby his Name is despised: for as much as by that the contract was confirmed. And therefore saith Malachie, *The Lord hath bene witnesse betweene thee and the Wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast transgressed,*

Mal. 2. 14.

transgressed; yet shee is thy companion, and the wife of thy Covenant.

First, his Ordinance is violated, an auncient Ordinance, *Reason 1.* the first that euer he instituted, for the vse of humane societie; an honourable Ordinance, a comfortable Ordinance, an Ordinance both profitable, expedient and necessary for the conseruation of mankind.

Secondly, those promises and protestations made before him, (which hee would haue as duely performed as their Oathes, are falsified and broken, and so his presence condemned through want of feare and reuerence of him.

Admonition to all that are obliged by Matrimoniall bonds, to looke warily to themselues, least they should forfeite them, and God put them in suite. No reliefe is to be had in any Court, or by any meanes, the power of the strongest will not maintaine them against the weakest: the close carriage of the matter will carry no force to keepe them safe or secret: the lenitie of the yoake-fellow in passing ouer the offences will not free them from punishment, or preserve them from shame, because though man may remit the trespass so farre as toucheth himselfe, yet hee cannot pardon the sinne vvhich is committed against the Lord.

Verse 18. Surely her house tendeth to death, and her pathes to the dead.

**T**HE woe and misery whereunto the whorish vvoman doth bring her customers, is now to be spoken of, and that is no lesse than destruction it selfe. For her house, the filthinesse and misbehaviour in her house, with the first entrance into familiaritie vvith her, tendeth to death, sometimes of the body, and alwayes of the soule: and her pathes, her course and order of life will bring him that accompanieth her therein, unto the dead, to the same estate and punishment with them that haue formerly perished in the same sinne.



Doffr.

All adulterers live in perill of death and damnation.

Their life is forfeited and likewise their saluation, so soone as they breake the bonds of wedlocke; though the Lord of his free mercie taketh not the aduantage of all, but spareth some few vpon whom he conferreth the grace

Pro. 5. 3. 4. 5.

of repentance. *Though the lippes of a strange woman droppe as an Hony-combe, and her mouth be more soft than Oyle, yet the end of her is as bitter as Wormewood, and as sharpe as a two-edged sword.*

Pro. 6. 27. 28.

29. 34.

*Her feete goe downe to death, and her steps take hold of Hell. Can a man take fire in his bosome and his cloathes not be burnt? or can a man goe upon scales, and his feete not be burnt? So hee that goeth in to his neighbours wife shall not be unpunished, whosoever toucheth her. Hee that committeth adultery with a woman is destitute of understanding. He that doth it destroyeth his owne soule. Reade Chap. 7. 26. 27. 1 Cor. 6. 9. Gal. 5. 19. 21. Ren. 21. 8. and 22. 15.*

Reason 1.

Leuit. 20. 10.

First, the Law of the Lord charged the Magistrate with such malefactors, requiring him to doe iustice vpon them, and to take away their liues, saying, *The man that committeth adultery with another mans wife, because hee hath committed adultery with his neighbours wife, the Adulterer and the Adulteresse shall dye the death.*

2.

1er. 29. 21. 22. 23.

Secondly, God doth after a speciall manner, by a providence, moue the Magistrate to inflict punishment vpon many of them, being there-to prouoked by other their crimes, as thefts, murders, treasons, and the like, which were all caused by their adulteries. So that they are sometimes executed for that whereof they were neuer indighted. Euen Gentiles and Infidels, Turkes and Pagans are often in this seruice, as was the King of Babel, an Heathenish Ruler, according to that threatening, *Behold, I will deliuer Achab the Sonne of Kolaiah, and Zedechiah the Sonne of Maaseiah into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, and hee shall slay them before your eyes. And all they of the captiuitie of Iudah that are in Babel, shall take vp this curse against them, and say, The Lord make thee like Zedechiah and like Achab, whom the King of Babel burnt in the fire, because they haue committed*

villani

villany in Israel, and haue committed adulterie with their neighbours wives, and haue spoken lying words in my name, which I commanded them not.

Thirdly, though they should escape the sword of the Magistrate, eyther being ignorant of the offence, or else too remisse in punishing of it, yet is their life and soule nothing the more in safetie, because the Lord, to whom the matter doth principally belong, is nothing the lesse angry and righteous. Though all men would passe ouer such a wicked fact, yet hee will pursue it, according to the saying of the Apostle; *Marriage is honourable among all, and the bed undefiled: but Whoremongers and Adulterers God will iudge.* Heb. 13. 4.

Verse 19. *Whosoener goe in to her, retorne not againe, neyther attaine they to the way of life.*

**T**HE punishment of Adultery is aggravated by the certainty of it, and vniuersalitie in respect of the offenders, being all almost in a desperate estate: and therefore hee saith; *Whosoener goe in vnto her retorne not againe.* None, of what estate and condition soeuer, that haue familiaritie, and commit filthinesse with her escape without mischief, and hardly euer come to repentance, or *attaine to the wayes of life*, reforme themselves, and take a better course of life, that they might be saued. And so these words are for the preuention of that wonted Obiection opposed against rebukes and threatnings for this sinne; Wee will repent, and helpe all: But, who doth so, saith the holy Ghost? *None that goe into her, retorne againe*, that is, very few: for it is an hyperbolicall, and comparatiue speech, as if he should haue said, there are none to speake of, that reforme themselves, in comparison of the multitude of them that continue impenitent vnto death, and are damned. This manner of speaking is frequent in the Scriptures, *No man calleth for Iustice, no man contendeth for the truth.* Isay 59. 4. *There is none that calleth vpon thy name, neyther that stirreth vp himselfe to take hold of thee.* Isay 64. 7. *I hearkened and heard, but none*

spake aright: no man repented him of his wickednesse, saying: What haue I done? Every one turneth to his race, as the hart rusheth into the battaile. Ier. 8. 6.

Doctrine.

Very few Adulterers are soundly cured of that sinne, and repent to saluation.

Prov. 23. 27.

All that fall into it doe not certainly perish: for this David could not haue beene saued, nor those Corinthians, whom the Apostle testifieth to haue beene washed, sanctified and Iustified: but not many which be once corrupted therewith, are throughly cleansed from it, and none without great difficultie. *A whore is a deepe ditch, and a strange man is as a narrow pit:* that is, the custome of conuersing with her is an inextricable intanglement, and such as is almost impossible for a man to rid himselfe of. If the deepe Dungeon were wide, or the narrow hole shallow, there were more likelihood of climbing vp, and creeping out: but depth and straitnesse ioyned together, are two such impediments, as whereby the imprisoned sinner becommeth well-neare hopelesse and helplese.

Reason 1.

First, the Harlot hath a speciall Art both to allure men vnto her, like a skilfull Fowler, with a call, and to hold them fast from departing away, when shee hath caught them, according to that saying of the Wise-man: *I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is as nets, and snares, and her hands as bonds: hee that is good before God shall be deliuered from her, but the sinner shall be taken by her.*

2.

Secondly, mans corrupt nature is very prone to this sinne of incontinencie, and this sinne of incontinencie is so delectable to mans corrupt nature, that after they are acquainted together, it is not easie to alienate the one from the other. They which haue beene once enchanted with the baites of filthy lust, had rather be bond-men than strangers vnto it.

3.

Thirdly, it is a sinne that not onely bereaueth men of their saluation, but of their modestie, and all good discretion: it maketh them shamelesse and impudent: it maketh them



them-fottish and Idcots : they are so infatuated by it, that neyther decay in estate, nor abalienation of friends, nor diseases of body, nor losse of honour, nor damnation of soule, nor any miserie present or future, can cause them to abandon it. Wee all finde the complaint of the Prophet verified almost in all, both Drunkards and Adulterers, and may truly testifie with him, that, *Whoredome, Wine, and new Wine, haue taken away their hearts.* Hose 4. 11.

Instruction for them that are yet free from the praetise of this more than beastly sinne, that they be heede-full to themselves with all warinesse, and neuer suffer themselves to be defiled with it. Come not neare to the brinke of such an infernall pit, where Death dwelleth, and destruction inhabiteth, and which is one of the lodgings of hell : feare to come neare to that whirle-pool which swalloweth vp so many millions, and permitteth scarce any of all (how puissant, or politicke focuer) to escape with life, or honour. Say not, I will swimme, for then thou wilt surely sincke : presume not of repentance, lest thou be plunged in perdition : for they of all others are most in danger of drowning, which promise to themselves the safest deliuerance.

If Death then, with Damnation, be hideous and fearefull, let adultery and whoredome be odious, and feared : forasmuch as the pangs of the one, doe so certainly follow the pleasures of the other. And in the second place, how much doth it concerne them that stand guilty of this crime to be awakened, and prouide for their owne indemnitie, as not knowing how soone they shalbe drawne to execution? They haue forfeited their soules, and the Law of God hath passed sentence, that they shall be deprived of both : and if they be spared from the stroke of a temporary violent death, they are the more subiect to the torture of eternall condemnation. Were these men well aduised, and did they considerately apprehend their owne estate, how could they possibly be so secure, and carelesse? Could they be so worldly, or aspiring, or voluptuous, or iocund? If they knew what hereafter they shall know; if they felt the feare of that whereof

they shall feele the torment, their haughty mindes would bow lower, their dainty morsells would be lesse delicate, and all their sports, their mirth, and pleasures would lose their relish, and turne to be bitter and vnpleasant vnto them. Now therefore in the time of their retriual, let them sue for a pardon, and so prevent the punishment, which otherwise remaineth for them. And let not the difficulty of obtaining grace discourage them from seeking of it, but rather augment their importunitie. Our Saviour equalizeth the vice of couetousnes with this of vnchastitie, when hee saith,

*Mat. 19. 24. 26 It is easier for a cable to goe through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of God: yet when his Disciples amazed thereat, demanded, Who then can be saved? He mitigated the matter, and said, With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible.*

Now as worldlinesse may be remitted, so may adultery: the loue of wealth may be quelled by Gods Spirit, so may the liking of an harlot: both whores, such a one as was *Rahab*, and whore-hunters, such an one as was *Samson*, may well be forgiuen, and cured, and saued, but with great humiliation, with many teares, with ardent prayers, with much mortification. And who would not constantly, and continually spend himselfe in these both day and night, for the fruition of Gods fauour, the recovery of his owne safety, for hope, for comfort, for life, and for saluation?

*Verse 20. That thou mayest walke in the way of good men, and keepe the paths of the iust.*

**T**He vertue of wisdom hath beene commended for the protection, and defence, which it yeeldeth against wicked wayes, and sinfull people, which now hee amplifieth by the contrary, shewing the benefites of it for direction to good wayes, and the society, and example of godly persons, as will be the better perceiued, if thou looke backe to the twelue and thirteene verses, and annexe this vnto them in this manner: *It shall deliuer thee from the euill way, and from the* man

in that speaketh froward things, and from them that leaue the eyes of righteousness, to walke in the wayes of darkenesse: that *u* may walke in the wayes of good men, and keepe the way the righteous, that is, be conuersant with them, and reforme thy selfe to their honest, and holy behauiour.

It much concerneth them that would liue Christianly, to imitate the example of the godly.

Doctr.

As the eares attending to that which by God is commanded, so the eyes obseruing what by good men is performed, doe direct their feete to the causy that leadeth to salvation: For so saith the Lord; *Stand by the wayes and behold*, *1er. 6. 16.* *and aske for the old way, which is the good way, and walke therein, and you shall finde rest to your soules.* As if hee had said, you that desire felicitie and happinesse with *Henoch, Noah, Abraham*, and all the rest of those worthy Patriarkes and principall men, be diligent to learne which hath bene the auncient path of veritie, in which they, and all the righteous euer since the beginning of the world, haue gone to saluation, and tread in the same steps after them, that you may feele the like spirituall comfort in earth, and finde such celestiall glory in the heauens. Many exhortations are vsed in the New Testament for this purpose, as, *Be followers of mee, and looke on them which walke so, as you* *Phil. 3. 17.* *haue vs for an ensample. Remember them which haue the oversight of you, which haue declared vnto you the word of God: whose Faith follow, considering what hath bene the end of their conuersation.* *Reade 1 Cor. 4. 16. and 11. 1. 2 Thes. 3. 7. 9. Heb. 6. 12. James 5. 10.*

First, hereby they that haue more graces, after a sort, *Reason 1.* communicate to those that haue fewer, the strong assist the weake, and the wise conduct the simple. Thou maist behold many shewing themselues good precedents by their conuersation, whom thou canst not haue opportunitie to heare giuing of precepts by words. Yea, the dead may remaine teachers to the liuing, and succeeding ages may be informed by those of former times.

Secondly, when godly mens good workes are proposed,



Hob. 12. 1.

Vse.

and heeded as patternes of obedience to Gods word, there is the more safetie and assurance in proceeding. You may know you are right: the path is beaten and made plaine before you, by their feet who haue passed thorow the selfe same way to the very same place without miscarrying. And therefore the Apostle tearmeth the vertuous examples of the faithfull Patriarkes and Fathers, *Winneses, a cloud of Winneses*, such as did so eminently and evidently giue testimonie to the truth, for all posterities to imbrace it, as the *Pillar of the Cloud* gaue direction to the Israelites in the wilderness which way they should trauell.

Reproofe of them (and that is of such a multitude as is innumerable) which neuer set foote in good mens steps, vnlesse it be in their extraordinarie actions, in which they are to haue no followers, or where they haue wandered or stumbled, or taken a fall by erroneous opinions, or humane infirmities, from neyther of which the best haue any certaine immunity. All Poperie and Heresie is grounded on this foundation: eyther they peruert the Scriptures, and learned mens writings, or else warrant themselves by the vnwarrantable sayings and practises of those which otherwise are sound and Orthodoxe. But the most part are most prone to follow the worst sort, especially if they be of place and qualitie, the scantling is taken from their number, estimation and greatnesse; and seldome or neuer from their vertues, sinceritie and goodnesse. It is euident to be seene, and much to be lamented, that vpright men are turned alone, and compelled to be solitarie: few conuerse with them, and almost none come after them in their vertue, whereas the worst of the vicked haue companie too much in every kinde of euill, and flockes doe follow them in the practise of any licentiousnesse. And what shall wee say of them that are not alone, and like to good men, but aduersaries to them? that doe not onely neglect the example of their faithfulnessse, but reproach it; which are so farre from imitating their integritie, as that they picke quarrels against the same, and depraue it.

Secondly,

Secondly, Instruction for Gods people to make their godlinesse and good conuersation conspicuous and apparant, that others may see which way they goe, and follow them in their foot-steps. S. Paul would haue them to shine *Phil. 2. 15. 16.* as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life. And S. Peter teacheth them to shew forth the vertues of him that *1 Pet. 2. 9.* hath called them, out of darknesse, into his meruailous light. Religion hereby is greatly glorified, the murtheres of malicious aduersaries, which are continually barking at the Gospell, and professors of it, are closely muzzled: and who knoweth how many soules by their Wisedome, Pietie, Mercy, Iustice, Humilitie, and other Splendent Graces are conducted into true obedience and immortall blessednesse. If God direct his Seruants to thy path, and bidde them keepe thee company, or follow thee therein, shouldest not thou then goe before them in the right way, in a safe way, in the best way, and be seene constantly, proceeding in the same without wandring? A righteous man can hardly tread awry without offence to all sorts: some will mourne, some will iustifie, some will imitate, some will divulge, some will maliciously charge the same vpon others; and some vwill insolently insult over all. The vicked shall not plunge so many by sincking vp to the shoulders, as hee shall by stepping over the shooes: and one furlong of his folly is more scandalous and harmefull to peruert others, than twentie Leagues of their lewdnesse who are notoriously sinfull.

Verse 21. *For the righteous shall dwell on earth, and the upright shall remaine therein.*

Verse 22. *But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be pluckt out of it.*

**H**ere haue we the conclusion of the precedent discourse, confirming it first by the kindnesse of God, in way of promise vnto the good; and then, by his contrary iudgements, in way of threatning vnto the euill. Touching the former, hee saith, *The iust shall dwell on earth*; be protected in

in times of perill, when others perish : and they and their seede be established so long as it is good for them, and inioy all such blessings of this life as will doe them most good. *But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, the vengeance of God shall ouer-turne their persons, estates, posterities, as grasse is mowne downe, or weedes plucked vp, or naughtie trees are rooted out.*

If any obiekt that the godly commonly haue the least part in the earth, and in earthly blessings, and are soonest removed; let him consider, that howsoeuer it seeme so, yet indeed it is nothing so. For while they liue here, the whole earth is theirs, with the vse of it, howsoeuer the Lord seeth it good to put them to a spirituall dyet, and keepeth them from surfetting by excelsse, the better to fit them for their heauenly inheritance : and when they are taken away by death, they be translated to immortalitie and glory, whereas the wicked inioy that little or much which they haue, as vsurpers and thecues doe an house which they haue broken into, and keepe for a few houres vntill the Officers come and apprehend them, and then are they cast into prison, or led vnto execution, they are ejected with a witnesse, and cast into perpetuall miserie.

*Doctr.*

The Lord doth not wholly reserue mens reward for the Iudgement to come, but giueth to many some part of their pay in this world.

*Psal. 47. 2.*

That which the Prophet in the case of a mercifull man doth professe both for and vnto the Lord, the Lord doth avow and will performe to every one that is righteous and mercifull, *The Lord will keepe him and preserue him alme: he shall be blessed vpon the earth, and thou shalt not deliuer him vnto the will of his enemies.* Peruse the thirtie leauenth Psalme, and note what consent and harmonie there is betweene David the Father, and our Solomon the Sonne, how fully they accord in this poynt, not onely in substance, but well-neare in words and syllables; *Such as be blessed of God, (saith the Psalmist) shall inherite the land or earth; and they that be cursed of him shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the land,*

*Psal. 37. 9. 11.  
22. 29. 38.*



land, and dwell therein for euer : but the transgreſſors ſhall be deſtroyed together, and the end of the wicked ſhall be cut off.  
Read Deut. 28. 1 Tim. 4. 8. Mat. 5. 5. Iob 18. 14. 16.

First, the Lord doth in this manner bleſſe the good, and curſe the bad, making ſome prosperous, and others vnhappy, for the manifeſtation of his Mercy, the publication of his Juſtice, and the declaration of Truth, that the world may ſee how faithfully hee performeth his promiſes, and with what ſeueritie he executeth his threatnings. *Reason 1.*

Secondly, hee prepareth the hearts of his people by theſe his proceedings to more Faith, and aſſiſteth them in their holy behaviour, when their eyes may behold the veritie of his words, the recompence of the righteous, and the puniſhments of the wicked: by meanes whereof they are led with hope vnto obedience; and affrighted with feare from ſinne and rebellion. *2.*

Thirdly, godly men be as fruitfull trees, the better they prosper, the better they are able to benefir their Brethren, and the longer they grow, the more good they doe, and therefore are eſtabliſhed by Gods owne fauour, and by the helpe of good mens prayers, which are very forcible: whereas the ſinfull miſcreants be like to Bryers and Brambles, which many wayes are very noyſome and hurtfull, as the Lord ſeeth with anger, and his ſeruants feeble with griefe, and therefore Gods diſpleaſure and mens complaints, will in time ſupplant them, and vterly abolith both roote and branch, and all the memoriall of them. *3.*

Encouragement vnto the feare of God, and righteousneſſe, the fruit whereof is ſo much, ſo ſweet, and ſo goodly, as they which are endued therewith, haue Chriſt to be theirs, and God to be theirs, and the world to be theirs; they are made heyres of heauen, and heyres of the earth, and by right and title with Chriſt, the owners of all things. How many wicked doe fall on this ſide, and on that, before, and behinde, when they ſtand firme? and what wiſe man obſerueth not his enemies to lye ſtill helpleſſe, when he is liſted vp againe? Hearken not then to theſe malignant and

*Uſe.*

and slanderous enemies of Religion, who by blasphemous imputations attempt to draw it into hatred, and to alienate all mens affections from it: as though shee could endure none of her friends and followers to be wealthy, to be honourable, to be chearefull, to prosper well, to liue long, and leaue a good estate to their Children. Such are the clamours of the world, and such is the falshood of the Diuell, against the veritie of the Scriptures, and the euident demonstration of experience.

2.

Folly of them that make worldlinesse, crueltie, lying, falshood, and other iniquities, the very foundation of their felicitie: by practise of these, they trust to compasse riches, and by hauing of riches they hope to become happy, and so they make vnrighteousnesse their trade, wicked *Mammon* their treasure, and this present world their principall Paradise: by which they doe not onely make their soules liable to the torments of hell, but likewise expose themselves to horrible plagues and iudgements on earth, and liue euery moment in perill thereof. They may peradventure purchase Lands, and take Leases, build houses, plant Orchards, make Gardens, and attaine to manifold commodities and delights, yet shall neyther they, nor theirs, inioy the same, longer than vntill they haue fulfilled the measure of their transgressions, than vntill their sinne be ripe, and Gods vengeance be ready, then downe they shall, how firmly soeuer they seemed to be rooted, and wither they must, how greene and flourishing soeuer they haue appeared: so farre shall they be from retayning their former beautie and excellencie in the spreading branches, as that not so much as a stumpe of them shall be left in the ground, to grow againe, after the time of their extirpation.

3.

Consolation to the poore, violently oppressed by the power of the mightie, that ouer-droppe all the lower plants which grow neare vnto them, and those most which beare most fruit; let them be well assured that so soone as they waxe harmefull, they are marked to be felled, and made fire-wood,

wood; and therefore the more troublesome they are, the lesse while they shall be troublesome; and one stroke of Gods hand can as easily cut downe an Oake, as an Elderne, as a Thistle, as a Bent. For hee that is most puissant and proud, hath no more power to resist the Axe of the Lord, than the grasse in the field to withstand the Sithe of the Mower, or the cloath to maintaine it selfe against the mouth of the Moath, according to those sayings of the Prophet:

*Feare yee not the reproach of men, neyther be afraid of their rebukes: For the Moath shall eat them up like a garment, and the Worme shall eat them up like wooll. I, even I am hee that comfort you. Who art thou, that thou should feare a mortall man, or the sonne of man which shall be made as grasse?* Isay 51. 8. 12.

F I N I S.